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Rev. J. W. S. Dutton.
With the respects of
E. A. Fish

WRENTHAM JUBILEE.

A

SERMON

PREACHED IN WRENTHAM, MASS.

JUNE 12, 1849,

BY REV. ELISHA FISH,

ON THE

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF HIS ORDINATION,

AS PASTOR OF THE ORIGINAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN SAID TOWN.

WITH AN APPENDIX.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY C. C. P. MOODY, AT THE OLD DICKINSON OFFICE,
52 WASHINGTON STREET.

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Rev. Elisha Fisk,

Dear Sir: — Having listened with great pleasure to your Discourse, delivered yesterday, upon the Semi-centennial Anniversary of your Ordination, we beg leave to express our earnest desire to see it in a more durable form. The event is one of rare occurrence, and the Sermon was to us one of great and permanent interest. We respectfully solicit from you a copy of it for the press.

Members of the Committee of Arrangements.

Horace James,
Samuel Warner, Jr.
Preston Pond,
Calvin Fisher, Jr.
Daniel A. Cook,
Thomas S. Cobb,
Curtis Stone.

Wrentham, June 13th, 1849.

Horace James,
Samuel Warner, Jr.,
Preston Pond,
Calvin Fisher, Jr.,
Daniel A. Cook,
Thomas S. Cobb,
Curtis Stone.

Members of the Committee of Arrangements.

Gentlemen: — I thank you for the favorable opinion you express of the Sermon delivered on the 12th instant, and submit it to your disposal.

Very respectfully yours,
Elisha Fisk.

Wrentham, June 14th, 1849.

To the Reader. — A word of apology may be suitable, in view of the delay which has occurred in the publication of this Discourse. Occurrences of a local and private nature have caused it; a circumstance on the whole to be regretted; but less so from the fact that the pamphlet possesses, we trust, a permanent value and interest. It is now commended to the kind attention of those who are interested in the events it commemorates.

SERMON.

"Moreover, I will endeavor that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance."—2 *Peter*, 1 : 15.

PETER was an apostle and minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. The text brings before us some of his views and feelings as such. They were, his own decease, his regard for those to whom he ministered, and his desire to be useful to them after he should be taken from them into another scene of existence. The means by which he would accomplish the end were, rehearsing and committing to writing the things which they had seen and heard, more especially, during his ministry. He did not believe that they were things which had had their day and were no more to be regarded, but were still to be held in remembrance, for instruction and spiritual benefit. This desire was not peculiar to the apostle. Bunyan, and Baxter, and Newton, and Luther, and Doddridge, and Edwards, and Fuller, and others, long since dead, had the same desire. Hence, the printed works which follow them, and will prolong their usefulness in ages yet to come. "Though the witnesses die, their testimony lives."

The views and feelings of the apostle should be mine to-day. I must depart. My heart's desire should be to leave a blessing behind me for those with whom I have been associated in near and sacred relations.

We find men in all ages commemorating past noticeable events, and rehearsing deeds of other days. There must, then, be something interesting in the past, which awakens and stirs the human mind. To look back to conditions and events; to recall to mind the spirit and acts of years gone by; what we have experienced and witnessed in our earthly course, is something more than mere

gratification of feeling. It is useful. The past is a treasure of knowledge, from which much may be drawn for present and future use. The memory is not an unnecessary faculty, nor history profitless. They would be so if nothing valuable is to be derived from the past. Let all which has been be left out of view, and one generation would be of no use to another; and we must begin, not only every year, but every day in ignorance. God not only allows, but requires men to review his past providences and their own conduct. "Thou shalt remember all the way by which the Lord thy God hath led thee. Consider the days of old, the years of many generations, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known unto their children. That the generation to come might know them; that they might set their hope in God and not forget the works of God."

If we consider that human nature is the same which it has been; that the same God reigns who has reigned; that his providential and moral administration are the same, and conducted on the same principles, we may see that a review of the last fifty years may be productive of good. In looking over this period, we may see God and men and things as they have been manifested in that length of time, more especially within the circle of our own observation, and feel a fresh sense of obligation to Him who has presided over all.

In our assembling on this occasion, we may and ought to have higher aims than merely to indulge a laudable propensity of our nature. It is not one of frequent occurrence and it should be noticed in a religious manner.

You are aware that fifty years ago to-day my ordination took place. Nothing of all which has since occurred, in relation to myself, to the church, and people in this place, can be reversed. Unalterable is enstamped upon the whole. There may be, however, a review, with profit to ourselves and to the honor of God. Ecclesiastical, rather than other matters, should be the most prominent in discourses on occasions like the present.

The topics to which I propose to direct attention will be mentioned as they come to be considered.

1. *I begin with myself.*

If the letter *I* should appear more conspicuous than other letters of the alphabet, the occasion will be considered as some apology.

The places of my birth and burial, I trust, will not be far apart. The first was in what is now called West Medway, then Holliston, and I expect to be buried in Wrentham Centre. I wish to lie among those with whom I have lived and to whom I have ministered. My parents removed to Upton when I was a year and a half old. There I passed the years of my childhood and youth.

But how came I into the ministry? From early life I was seriously inclined, and even tenderly affected upon the subject of religion. The Holy Spirit often strove with me. When five years old, I had read the Bible through, in course. My serious cast of mind was observed by those about me. The observation was frequently made that I would be a minister. I felt inclined to be one. I remember going into retired places and preaching to surrounding objects. Circumstances favored my seriousness. The minister of the place, who was intimate in college with Rev. Mr. Bean, the last of my predecessors, except one, was faithful to me. To him, to my mother, and two or three other individuals, I was indebted for my continued thoughtfulness and concern. As to my further religious views and experience, I would only now say, that my convictions were deep and powerful, and continued many months. In the issue, all was light and peace and joy. Everything seemed to be praising God.

I had a great desire for learning, and I read as I could get books and time. My mind became strongly fixed on getting a collegiate education. It seemed that I could not give up the object for any other course of life. But the way was hedged up.

The minister of the place, and one or two others, favored my wishes. At length the way was opened; and by close study, and by making every thing subserve my purpose, I finished the preparatory studies and entered Brown University.

During my last year in that institution, I thought more closely concerning the profession I should study. As a college life had rendered me less serious, I was somewhat inclined to read law.

The consideration of my spiritual and eternal interests turned the point. I could not think of losing my soul, as I then feared I should, if I did not go into the ministry. I decided, and directed my studies accordingly. At length I was examined and licensed to preach. Thus was I led into the gospel ministry.

But how came I to be settled in this place? I was led by a way that I knew not.

My entering the college which I did, instead of another, as I wished, and afterwards becoming an instructor in it, and the occasional supply of the pulpit here by one of its officers, prepared the way for my being known and employed as a candidate in this place. I came. Forty-eight candidates had preceded me.* Only one of the number received a call. His answer was in the negative.

On the first Sabbath in May, in 1798, I commenced preaching to the Original Congregational Church and Society in Wrentham. Being invited elsewhere, I preached but a part of the time here during the following Summer and Autumn. After obtaining, in various ways, a knowledge of my doctrinal views and of church order and discipline, the church invited me to become their pastor and minister, November 9th, of the same year. Subsequently the society united with the church in their request.

After unsuccessful attempts to induce them to withdraw the condition of a "six month's notice" in their call, I took the subject of an answer into serious consideration. I could settle in some other places with the prospect of less labor and difficulties, and of a competent support. The previous contentions, and divisions, and alienations here, were discouraging. I should have trials and difficulties to encounter in the very outset of my ministry. On the other hand, the union in the church and society, in regard to me, and the probable results should I decline to settle among them, seemed to indicate an affirmative answer. It was given April 25th. On the 12th of June, 1799, and about this hour, my ordination took place. The day was fair, the assembly large. Thus, in the providence of Him who appoints unto men the bounds of their habitation, was I brought to a settlement in this place.

Seventeen churches were invited to sit in council. The Rev. Dr. Prentiss, of Medfield, offered the introductory prayer. The Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, of Providence, preached the Sermon. His text was 2 Corinthians, 4: 3, 4. The Rev. Dr. Fobes, of Raynham, offered the consecrating prayer. The Rev. Mr. Green, of Mansfield, gave the charge. The Rev. Mr. Wilder, of Attle-

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* See Appendix.

borough, gave the right hand of fellowship; and the Rev. Dr. Emmons, of Franklin, offered the concluding prayer, on that solemn occasion. I believe that Mr. Cyrus Guild led the choir of singers. Mr. Benjamin Day, a member of the church, entertained the council at the public house, at his own expense. The occasion passed. The work of the ministry was then before me.

2. *I would next give some account of the religious state of things in the church and society when my ministry commenced.*

Some errors in the doctrines of my immediate predecessor, and his treatment of those who differed from him, were said to be the exciting causes of the difficulties which had existed. One of the subjects, upon which he strongly and frequently insisted, was, that the atonement consisted in the obedience of Christ, and that his sufferings and death made no part of it, only as they were matters of obedience. This was contrary to what was believed to be the teaching of the Scriptures on a fundamental point, to the articles of faith, and to the preaching of the former ministry. In some other minor points he was thought to be incorrect. Instead of being conciliating towards those who were dissatisfied, it was said that he was overbearing, and made the impression that there was a ruling mind in the church and society, and that what he wished must be done. For this, all the church and people were not prepared. Contentions and divisions ensued. A number of large councils were called. The results were his dismission, and a division in the church and society. The line of division ran not only between families, but between individuals of the same family. A law suit followed, that in no measure relieved the alienations and contentions which existed.

The individual referred to, was a man of commanding personal appearance, of handsome address, of a loud and well modulated voice. Apart from his band and black coat, he might have been taken for a general instead of a chaplain in the army, as he actually had been.

It is well that there be no more remembrance of what then passed than is sufficient for an admonition to ministers and people. There were other difficulties. To use the expression of another,—"Politics then ran mad." The people in this place were deeply infected with the political spirit which then prevailed. A minister

could neither speak nor vote without giving offence in some quarter, nor without endangering his influence and usefulness.

More difficulties still. Arminianism, Universalism, and Deism, had each a number of warm advocates among us.

From these facts you will readily infer the amount of time and labor, and the judgment and caution requisite to restore union and peace, and to bring things into a settled and well-ordered state. The object aimed at was obtained. A course much different from the one pursued would, probably, have weakened and laid waste the church and society. It certainly would have prevented that collected and prosperous state which has so long been enjoyed. A few only among us can now appreciate what was done to save and build up the cause.

3. *Besides those relating to the settlement of difficulties, I would next advert to other ministerial labors.*

I refer not to the stated services of the Sabbath. The territorial extent of the society is large; including more families and individuals than usually belong to a single congregation.

Of course there were more calls to visit the sick, and to attend funerals, than commonly falls to the lot of a pastor. When the spotted fever prevailed, I went from house to house regardless of the exposure. When I came among this people, *a family meeting* for religious purposes had been kept up more than sixty years. Once in two weeks, on Friday afternoon, they met in the different houses of the members of the church, and in other houses when especially requested. These meetings are still continued. From them I have rarely been absent.

The Quarterly Concert of Prayer was observed by the church un il the Monthly Concert commenced. I wrote and delivered sermons designed to be appropriate on those occasions. At the monthly concerts I have usually been present.

Private fasts were held by the church on various accounts. Among others, that of the declining and low state of religion.

Catechising the children, from year to year, in each school district, was attended until the commencement of Sabbath Schools.

Bible Classes were held in different neighborhoods.

Perhaps no private meetings were more instructive than those in which numbers came together statedly to hear pieces read and

remarked upon, which were written by those who agreed to attend, on subjects previously assigned.

For years, an evening prayer meeting was held in the house of the pastor, and, during a time, a morning prayer meeting was attended in the hall of the Academy.

Some of the benevolent societies among us held their anniversaries. On these occasions a sermon was preached, generally by some one whom I procured, when I did not preach myself.

In times of religious revivals, meetings were multiplied, and ministerial labor increased. I have preached many sermons at funerals and in houses where were those who were unable to attend public worship.

Until the latter part of the time which we are reviewing, candidates for admission into the church were examined and propounded by the pastor, without the aid or advice of a church committee.

These statements may be sufficient to indicate something of the amount of ministerial labor here performed.

I have not mentioned the numerous meetings of the church concerning their secular affairs, and for hearing and acting in relation to the reports of Committees on various subjects submitted for consideration. I have not brought into view my cares and labors, during forty-seven years, as a member of the school committee; nor what I have done to get up and to continue in operation the public literary institution in this place; nor the editing, with others, a monthly magazine four years; nor my serving as chaplain of the regiment nine years; nor my instructing and care in the Academy a year; nor instructing a number of students in private, and fitting several for college.

4. *The church here, and of it I would next speak, was gathered April* 13*th*, 1692, *and consisted of ten members.*

It has now existed one hundred and fifty-seven years. Since that time, three others have been formed from it; the church in Franklin, in Foxborough, and in the north parish in this town. From its beginning it has been Congregational in its principles and practice, and, as a body, unchanging in its belief of what are termed the doctrines of grace. It has held the even tenor of its way amidst all there has been to subvert and turn it aside. The number belonging to it at the time when I became the pastor, I

have not ascertained. It now consists of two hundred and sixty-two members. Of this number, one hundred and ten have been added since the settlement of a colleague, and seventy-one were added last year. During my sole ministry, there were four revivals of religion; in 1804–5, in 1815–16, in 1821, and in 1832. In these seasons the church was greatly increased. The greatest number added in one year was fifty-eight. In three other years there were added fifty-one, forty-three, and thirty-six. Besides these, there were more or less ingatherings from year to year. Since the recent settlement of a pastor, there has been another revival of religion, in which seventy-one were added to the church and sixty-three baptisms administered. It is well known that in years long since passed, protracted meetings were held in this and in other states in great numbers. Concerning their utility, as they were sometimes conducted, there was reason to doubt. There was too much management; too much dependence on men and measures; too much that seemed to imply that we have the Holy Spirit at command; too much denunciation, by the leading revival preachers, against those ministers and churches who were not ready to fall in with all their views and measures.

I doubted not that there were real conversions, but I could not divest myself of the belief that many were declared to be converted on too slight grounds, and brought into the churches. Although some good might have been done, yet I feared the results to the churches and to the cause of religion would be as we have since seen them to be.

As many in the church were desirous of such a meeting, and said they would leave the whole conducting of it to me, one was appointed. The meeting was in January, 1833. It was still, orderly, and impressive throughout, and the results favorable.

5. *To pass from the church to the congregation.*

Since the time to which we refer, the people here have been generally prosperous in their pursuits and concerns. The good hand of God has been upon them.

About the time of my settlement, the Congregational Society was incorporated to hold funds for the support of the ministry. Since, no ministerial tax has been made. A bell and clock were procured soon after. It was thought that an organ would be a

great aid to the singing. One was purchased by the ladies, with chip and straw bonnets, of Mr. Pratt, formerly an inhabitant of this place. When set up, there was the formality of a dedication. I preached on the occasion. The text was, "Praise Him with stringed instruments and organs." The object of the discourse was to justify the use of instrumental music in public worship.

A few years since, that organ gave place to the larger and superior one which we now have. It was procured by subscription, except the avails of the sale of the other organ.

Looking at the number of our youth and the condition of our schools, I felt it important that an academy should be erected in this centre, for the benefit of the rising generation.

The efforts made to raise funds for the purpose were successful. Mr. Benjamin Day, a member of this church, after whom the institution was named, was the largest subscriber. An act of incorporation was obtained, and afterwards a grant of half a township of land in the province of Maine. A building was erected and completed, for the reception of students, in 1808. It was opened by prayer by the Rev. Doctor Emmons, and by an address delivered by Bradford Sumner, Esq., the first preceptor. The Honorable Judge Ware was the first President of the Board of Trustees. Miss Susan Bulfinch was a Preceptress.

It was the request of the largest donor that nothing contrary to evangelical sentiments should be taught in the building, to the erection of which he had contributed. To this his associates agreed.

Many resorted to it for acquiring learning. In it a large number of students have been fitted for higher usefulness in the common business of life, and for entrance into the colleges.

The institution flourished until others of the kind were multiplied in the neighboring towns.

To get and to keep it in operation has required much time and effort on the part of those to whom its interests were more immediately intrusted. The benefits to the young should be deemed a sufficient compensation.

Among other things done in the place, was the institution of a bank. It commenced business Nov. 1st, 1822. Philo Sanford, Esq., was the first President, and Calvin Fisher, Jr., Esq., the only Cashier.

The fourth meeting house, in which we are now assembled, was built in 1834, with as much union as to location and other circumstances as usually obtains in like cases. It was dedicated on the 24th of September of that year. I preached a sermon on the occasion from John 4 : 24.

In mentioning the favor of God to this people, the unanimity with which a colleague was settled and continues here, deserves special notice.

It was not so much on account of any physical disability to labor which I felt, as on other accounts, that I thought it wisest and best that another should be settled before my ministry should cease. I feared the consequences if the people should be left destitute, and there was work enough which needed to be done to employ the services of two.

My views were cautiously made known to some of my brethren in the sacred office, a considerable time before they were disclosed to any one else. At length I communicated them to some individuals in the place.

Some unpleasant things occurred, but measures were taken to accomplish the object which I had presented.

Accordingly the junior pastor was ordained Nov. 1, 1843. Mr. Kirk preached the sermon. After more than five year's trial, the result justifies the wisdom, both of the experiment and of the selection of the individual.

Now there will need to be no interruption in the regular ministry, and no long trials or warm disputes about the choice and settlement of another, when my labor and life are done.

Still keeping an eye on the favor of God to the people in this place, I would say, that amidst so numerous a population, and amidst all that there has been to disturb and to divide, the union in the church and society, for fifty years, is a blessing not to be overlooked or lightly estimated. It is a credit to the people and to the place.

While the judgments of God have been abroad in the earth, they have fallen but lightly upon us. Except the spotted fever in 1815, when so many died, there has been no prevailing sickness to hurry off in a season great numbers to the grave. This, and the September gale of the same year, were the most memorable calamities

to which we have been subjected. Only five dwelling-houses, about the same number of barns, and one factory have been burned.

There have been some other adverse occurrences. The deaths and removals from the place of a number of our leading and respectable citizens, have somewhat checked and discouraged a spirit of enterprise, but it is not dead. It will revive again. No further reference will be made to untoward events. We have reason to thank God and to take courage.

6. *In further speaking of the people in this place, I would make their liberality a separate article.*

Nearly all the benevolent societies of the age have come into existence since my ministry commenced. Of course there were no auxiliary societies of any kind, nor stated contributions, made to relieve suffering humanity and to send the word of life to those who were perishing for the lack of vision. I need not state either the names or the number of these benevolent associations, so well are they known.

We have our Foreign, and Domestic, and Bible, and Education, and Tract, and Anti-Slavery, Sabbath School and Temperance Societies, not to mention several others. To all these the people here have contributed, besides occasional contributions to other objects. They have had the credit of being among the first in the County in the amount given to several of them.

Credit to whom credit is due. The Ladies have exceeded those of the other sex in their contributions.

Some individuals have been prominent in their deeds of beneficence. As they are well known in this community, they need not be named. Many others, with no less liberal views and feelings, if they have not done what they could, have done in proportion to their ability. I have not the means of knowing the whole amount contributed, but it must be several thousands. I will cite another instance; pious indigent students, designed for the gospel ministry, have been assisted in their preparatory studies. Several families boarded them, either gratuitously, or at a reduced price. Others contributed towards the payment of their tuition in the Academy. Such aid was not in vain.

Those assisted, with one or two exceptions, are now able and useful ministers of the gospel. One, the Rev. Dr. Parker, is now

laboring with success in the great Missionary field of China. The bread cast upon the waters is already found.

The poor of the church have been cared for. They have annually received something for their relief since the year 1816.

As I do not forget them, I mention parochial visits, once a year, at the house of the pastor. These have come into practice within a few years, and are an additional way of manifesting the liberal feelings of the people, and of doing good. Both the pastors were bountifully and respectfully noticed in this way some months past.

7. *I would now group together a number of particulars.*

Since I have been a minister in this place, there have been one thousand one hundred and fifty deaths; one hundred and seventy-five during the colleagueship. Three by drowning; one by being so burned as to live but a short time; one by suicide; one was lost in the Lexington. *Twenty-six* were over *ninety* years; the oldest was *ninety-eight and a half years.* A greater number were over *eighty* years, and a still greater over *seventy.*

I have joined in marriage *five hundred and eighty-three couples.*

Whether it be owing to the superior qualities of our ladies, or to the want of taste and judgment in professional men, I would not decide to-day, but I have joined in the marriage relation seventeen clergymen, eight lawyers, and eight physicians, besides merchants.

Within the time we are considering, twenty-eight of our young men have been educated at college. Seven are in the gospel ministry; two now in the study of theology; four of the number are physicians; eight in the profession of law; seven have gone to other scenes of existence. Besides these, we have one now in his collegiate course.

I have attended more than a hundred and fifty ecclesiastical councils, and preached on many public occasions abroad.

8. *In speaking of improvements in this place, I would refer you to a number of things already stated, and glance at some others.*

I pass the notice of those made in our houses, in our farms, in our roads and carriages, and state that there was but a single factory, and that on a small scale, in this or any other part of the town, or even in this region, except in Pawtucket, when I came into this place. Now there is an enlargement of that, and the

addition of others. Some of our burial grounds present a far better aspect, and show a far better public spirit in the people, and that those who dwell there are still had in remembrance.

There have been improvements in our Schools, and in the means furnished to the young for acquiring knowledge. Sabbath Schools have been instituted. In some of our habits and practices there has been a change for the better.

When I first came to the place, that which intoxicates was freely circulated on funeral occasions. It is not so now. Upon reasoning with people in private, they early discontinued the practice. It was a longer time before it ceased when calls and visits were made. Although much has been done and much accomplished, yet much remains to be done, before all the evils of intemperance shall cease from among us.

Can I say that there has been an improvement in moral principles, in family instruction and government, in obedience and respect to parents and superiors, and in the observance of the Sabbath? I leave it with conscience to answer these questions.

9. *Before saying some things further in relation to my own ministry, I would briefly advert to that of my predecessors.*

They were four; Man, Messinger, Bean, and Avery. The first was ordained April 13, 1692, and the last, May 25, 1786.

The first three had one advantage over their successors.

In their day, what the Bible was understood to say, and what the minister said, were received without gainsaying. Peace and harmony prevailed in the church and congregation. The cause of religion strengthened and advanced. The preaching of the fourth was evangelical, rather than of a different character.

The whole time of settled ministry here is one hundred and fifty-two years. One hundred and two years were occupied by those who were before me. Of course, my own ministry has been nearly one third of the whole time.

This people have been destitute of a settled minister but eight years since the church was organized.

The longest time was between the removal of the fourth minister and the settlement of the present senior pastor; a period of more than five years. Since that time the pulpit has rarely been vacated for a single Sabbath. When I have been unable to preach I have

procured supplies. Since 1812, I can think of no more than one or two Sabbaths on which I have been unable to preach.

Of my own ministry, it becomes me to speak with modesty and humility. While sole minister my cares and labors were great.

In the last half of fifty years they were increased, and exceeded those of any former period. More dangers threatened the church and the integrity of the society. More subtle undermining forces were at work. Exciting subjects and *isms* were multiplied in the community, and we were not beyond their reach and influence. They produced a state of things which rendered the duties of a minister more difficult and arduous.

In matters of theology, I never could see with the eyes of other people. I have used the aid of others to point out objects to me, but I have looked at them with my own eyes, and seen for myself whether things were so.

I supposed that there were other evidences of truth besides that of mere authority.

That evidence I wished to see. Steadily have I believed that truth must be somewhere, and it would stand, and must be met by myself and all others. Hence, the knowledge of it seemed important. Ingenious minds may make theories, as children make bubbles, and many of those which have been formed have in them about the same amount of real substance. They may be fine, attractive, but they will bear no weight, and endure no trial. They will vanish away.

It has not been my practice to try the Bible by any scheme of philosophy, or theories which have been devised; to receive, or reject, or explain away its contents, so as to make it conform to them, but to try them by the Bible, so far as they have anything to do with religion.

I have endeavored to follow the direction of the apostle. "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God." By what should I try them, but by the Scriptures of truth? Throw them aside, and when you die, you plunge into a gulf unknown and fearful.

To be governed by evidence, not feeling, not by a desire to be singular, or original, if I could be, has been my aim in all my inquiries after truth. A more important question has not been

asked, since men were upon earth, than the one which Pilate put to our Saviour: "What is truth?"

If I believe, I know why, and can give the reason. As it was the understanding between me and this people, that I should preach the truths and the religion of the Bible, I have endeavored to do so, and to select subjects as their spiritual cases seemed to require. If any one perish, who has sat under my ministry, it will not be because I have not showed him his danger and the way of life. As I read some modern theological writings, I pause and ask myself, Can this be the faith once delivered to the saints?

That system of doctrines, of which the atonement for sin by the sufferings and death of Christ is the great central truth, is the one of my belief, and which I have uniformly preached.

I believe it, not merely because it seems to be in the Bible, but because I do not know how fairly to get it out of the Bible, and because, instead of finding any other way of salvation revealed, I find it declared that there is no other. I believe it because it meets the exigencies of the case, and I see no other that does. I believe it because it is so comprehensive, so wide in its bearings, so full of grace, so godlike, and so unlike what men would devise.

I believe it because of the effects which the preaching of it has had on men for eighteen centuries. They are the things the apostle would have kept in remembrance.

In the discharge of my duties, I have endeavored to be governed by the same book from which I derived my articles of belief. In the absence of specific directions I have found plain common sense the safest guide in ministerial and church matters. Habitually have I kept in mind the religious interests of the church and society, and labored to promote them in ways which seemed best adapted to the purpose. I have guarded, as I could, against the intrusion of error, and contrived to lessen its influence and effects when introduced.

It has never been my practice to urge persons into the church. I preferred a sound united church, to one composed of different views and feelings. To me it has not seemed advisable, nor according to Scripture, to admit persons into the church that they might become pious, but to receive only those who give evidence

of piety. A church should be composed, not of those who *may* become Christians, but of those who are so.

Instead of dwelling on some favorite subject, and impressing the minds of the hearers with the idea that it was almost the only truth or duty which need to be regarded, I have taken a wider view of the matter, and have considered rather what the spiritual interests of men and the good of the great cause of Christ required. If I am behind the age, it is not because I have been inattentive to what the age is doing.

10. *You expect to hear of the changes which have taken place among us, since the time to which we refer.*

Our hills and plains remain. The same sun and moon continue to shine down upon us. The evening skies are nearly the same. But how much else remains unchanged ?

The last member of the ecclesiastical council, convened at my ordination, has recently gone to his final rest. Few only of those who composed the numerous assembly on that occasion are among the living. Most of the families are broken up, and the members either dead or dispersed abroad.

Only three heads of families, then in a married state, remain so; and but ten others are living among us. Instead of the fathers are the children and their children's children.

If I look into the church, the venerable deacons, who then were, are gone, and but one member of the church, when I was first connected with it, is left, and she is a widow. Through the goodness of God, she meets with us to-day. She is the solitary remnant of the church that existed fifty years since.*

A great number of those since united have followed them to their home in the dust, and to the vast scenes of the eternal state. Many others of them have removed their relation from us to the churches where they are located.

To look beyond our own limits. Every member of the Association of Ministers, living when I joined that body, has finished his work and gone to his reward. The Rev. Mr. Wood was the last. And even others, who entered into their labors, have been removed, either by death, or to other fields of labor.

No minister then settled in the County is living, and but *eight*

* This statement must be slightly modified. See Appendix, p. 27.

in the State, who have been settled over the same people during that time, and but *fifteen* in New England. Of the *eight*, I am one. You will see, then, why this day is so noticeable to me, and why it ought to be to the church and people in this place. *This day should be a memorial.* The longest time any of the fifteen has been settled is sixty-eight years. He is now ninety-five. This is as long a ministry among the same people as I find on record.

If we look into the civil and political classes of men in our country, we shall find the same wastes of time and death.

Washington was then living. John Q. Adams is now dead, and nearly every distinguished man of the Revolution, and, I believe, all those who formed our National Constitution.

How many in the state and in the nation have been set up and pulled down, during the last half century. They have fulfilled the designs of Providence and passed away to other scenes. Their names and the remembrance of their deeds remain; but the places which once knew them, know them no more. Not only the *fashion*, but the *men* of this world pass away and give place to others.

"Of the fifty present reigning rulers of the large and small states of Europe, only one, if one, was in power at the time" when I was here put in trust of the gospel ministry. Kings as well as mean men must die.

11. *That period of years over which we are casting our eyes, has been one of great events;* perhaps greater and more numerous than can be found in any other of equal length.

I refer not to wars, and the desolations made by them, but to more auspicious events. The spirit of liberty, and the knowledge of human rights, have greatly increased among men. Thrones are shaking, which were firm within a shorter period than the one we are contemplating. Huge systems of idolatry, and of other false religions among the eastern nations, show symptoms of approaching dissolution. Mighty energies are at work, and will complete their overthrow. The prospects of the ignorant and oppressed are brightening over the earth. These are not events of ancient date. How changed the prospects of him who claims to sit in Saint Peter's chair, and to be infallible — who once had a king, or an emperor, to hold his stirrups while he mounted the steed upon which he rode! How different this condition from the one in which he lately was,

when fleeing from the Vatican in the livery of a servant. Within the time of which we are speaking, a degree of wakefulness has appeared in the church, and she has begun to look with concern over the wants and woes of the world, and to put into operation plans for the relief of human degredation and suffering, and for the spread of the Gospel over the earth. Nearly all bible, missionary, tract, education, peace, anti-slavery, temperance, seaman's friend, and other philanthropic societies, have risen up in Christendom to meet the exigencies of the world. In our own land light has increased. The means of education have abundantly multiplied. Advancement in the arts is without a parallel in any other equal period of time. It is believed to be greater than in the sciences. It has been an age of the application of principles to practical purposes.

What facilities are there for travelling, and still more rapid for communication now, than were known a few years since.

Perhaps, your patience would not endure a further detail even of improvements. I forbear, and leave it with you to decide whether additional territory should be mentioned as an improvement, or only as an enlargement.

12. *We have looked at the past*, and seen in a very limited degree, how God has governed, and what men have done. *Let us now glance at the future.*

It will be full of great interest, and of great events. The world will be onward and not retrograde in its movements. Learn from the Scriptures what the condition of the world is to be, and see what it now is, and you will be convinced that there will be yet great changes and overturns in the earth. How many unfulfilled predictions remain to be fulfilled? Heaven and earth will pass away sooner than one of them fail of fulfilment. What great events must take place before the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters do the seas; and before there shall be nothing to hurt, or destroy in all the earth; when the Lord's name shall be one from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same? Truth and liberty, and the rights of man, and holiness, will have a general prevalence amongst men.

Now, the adversaries are many, the obstacles great. The truth and spirit of God will subdue and convert multitudes. Still there will be those who oppose themselves. There will be a battle. The

slain of the Lord, we are expressly told, will be many. Who can look over the last fifty years, and see what preparations have been making for doing away the evils under which the world has groaned, being burthened; who can look at the late sudden changes and upheavings among the nations, and witness the spirit by which they are actuated, and not be convinced that mighty changes are not far off in time?

If great commotions precede great events, is it not evident that such events are at hand?

I am no prophet; but I have read the writings of the prophets and apostles, and observed the movements of Providence. Were I to live another fifty years, I should expect to see greater things than I have seen. There may be some sitting, if not standing, here who will see them. The world will be in a greatly changed condition, and for the better, in 1899 from what it was in June, 1799.

The intervening years will be full of trial and of conflict. Let fathers and mothers think of this, in the education of their children. Let the young think of it.

The great future is before us all. It is easy to look back, and to relate what we have seen and heard; but who can look onward into the coming ages of his being, and tell what he shall witness and feel?

13. *In review I feel that I have great reason for gratitude to God, for my long continuance here, and for his other great and distinguishing favors.* — Beyond my own expectation, and that of others, I was recovered from a wasting and threatening disease in the early part of my ministry. God has granted me many subsequent years of unusual health and vigor, even to the present time. It is a satisfaction to feel that I have not labored wholly in vain. Trials I have had, but I have been sustained under them. As my day, so has my strength been. You may think that a preacher of fifty years ought to have done more good. The truth of this will not be questioned. But all the good may not have been seen, or justly estimated.

And what shall he think of those who have *heard* fifty years, or a considerable part of that time, and have not come to repentance, and have themselves done no more good, and become no better? Must he not think that the word preached did not profit, not being

mixed with faith in them that heard it? If you would judge truly, think of those with whom he has had to do.

The general treatment which I have received from this people has been all that I could reasonably expect. They have been respectful, generous and kind. If any have been otherwise minded, they are forgiven.

The best return I could make, I have endeavored to make. I have been with them in many trying scenes, and have felt with them, and aimed to instruct and comfort and benefit them.

It would require much now to separate my feelings and regards from them. I know no other church and people, and no other home.

It is a credit to them that I have been retained so long as their pastor and minister; especially in such days of change and love of novelty, when a minister is thought to be getting old, and must give place to another about the time of life when the Levitical priests were allowed even to *enter* upon their office. What do I owe to Him who has made me to differ?

14. *This church and people should feel their obligation to God.*

To have the stated and uninterrupted ministry of the Gospel fifty years is not a common blessing. How many ministers have some churches and societies had to settle since that time. One within our knowledge has its seventh minister. Others have settled their two and three and four. No ecclesiastical council has been called to hear and advise concerning difficulties.

While other places have been much like the mountains of Gilboa, on which there is no dew, repeated showers of grace have descended upon us. Much people here have been added to the Lord.

The congregation of worshippers has been large. Though the society has increased, yet error probably has gained nothing in respect to numbers, except those who have come in from other places. Evangelical doctrines have here been maintained, while errors of various kinds have invaded other places, and unhappily affected the religious state of things. I repeat not again your secular prosperity, nor your exemption from many judgments which have been sent upon others. I would only remind you of your present prospect of remaining without disunion, and in the faith once delivered to the saints. *So may it be.* I trust it will be. Should not your language be to-day: What shall we render to the Lord for all his bene-

fits? and your resolution, that we will keep these things in remembrance, and hold fast those doctrines of truth and grace, after he has gone, who preached them unto us.

15. *We can hardly fail to reflect to-day on the moral discipline we have been under, for the series of years just passed.*

The changes, the events in Providence, have been great, and full of instruction and warning. The judgments of the Most High have been abroad in the earth, and some of them have been very terrible. Who can review them, and not feel that he has been under a moral training, fitted to teach him that there are designs and counsels above those of men, and to make him stand in awe, and sin not? — to impress him with a sense of the uncertainty and vanity of all earthly good, and that this is not his rest? How fitted is what we have seen and known, to teach us the great truth that verily there is a God who judges in the earth, and whose favor must be life? How much have we witnessed that should wean us from earth, and dispose us to set our affections on things above?

If this were the hour when I were to bid farewell to the work of the ministry and to the world, I would say to my *brethren*, other classes of men occupy stations and perform deeds more splendid than yours, and more sought and admired by the world; but none sustain so high a commission; none are engaged in so hallowed a calling; none on whom heaven looks with such intense interest; none whose labors will be followed with consequences so important. Let not the greatness and difficulty of your work, and the opposition you have to encounter, discourage you. The strongest and best part of the beings in the universe are on your side. The truth which you are directed to declare is mighty; and if there be no power on earth to convert men, there is in heaven, and it is promised.

Take care of the churches, for they are observed by all the enemies of the kingdom: their spirit and conduct greatly affect the interests of religion, and the cause you are laboring to promote. Next to yourselves, those who are under the dominion of darkness and sin will the most earnestly endeavor to corrupt, subvert and destroy *them*.

Take care of the Bible, and see that its sacred contents be not theorized away, and their hold weakened on the consciences and hearts of men. You are not called to resist unto blood, as others

have been, but you are called to labor when the enemy is changing his measures, and frequently altering his mode of attack. Be watchful, then. Take care of your minds and hearts, and of those to whom you are called to minister. Stand in your lot; fulfil the duties of your station. Be earnest and diligent. Work while you may. Your fifty years, like mine, will soon pass. Your rest and your reward are at hand.

To the *churches* I would say, consider the great design for which you are embodied. It is not merely to come together at the table of the Lord. You are in danger of resting in the mere forms of religion; of throwing aside all forms; of being satisfied with a mere spiritual religion; one of decent exterior; one in which you will scarcely differ from those who make no profession. You are in danger of becoming lax in faith, and in order and discipline. Remember the seven churches of Asia, and hear what the Spirit said unto them.

To the *unbelieving*, to the *infidel*, I would say, the evidences of Christianity are becoming more numerous and strong, as years come and pass away. It has been so the last half century. The objections raised by learned and powerful minds are refuted. If greater ones cannot be found, the cause of infidelity is gone. You see the power and effects of the Gospel, and how it extends from year to year, after all that is devised and said and written against it, and all the light of the age. What will stop its course and put it down? Is it not time to pause, and consider?

To the *young*, I would say, you belong to a generation, like that to which I belong, and which will soon pass away. You are coming on to the stage, to take the management of the affairs of the church, and of the world. Be not self-confident. Seek that wisdom which is from above, and profitable to direct. Shun the paths of vice, and of the destroyer. In all your ways acknowledge God, and he will direct your paths. You are now in the outset of your being. Fail not to keep in mind, that on this part of it depends a future and eternal destiny. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. *I have done.* I go the way, the way whence I shall not return. I depart in hope; and leave, with entire confidence, the church here, and the interests of Zion, in the hands of Him who is head over all to the church, and who is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour.

APPENDIX.

For some time previous to the 12th of June, 1849, the attention of numerous individuals of this church and religious society had been directed to that occasion, as being one of surpassing interest to ourselves; and the unanimous desire had been expressed that it should be noticed with suitable services. After consultation had with Rev. Mr. Fisk in regard to it, and the obtainment of his consent that a Jubilee should be celebrated, and a Sermon preached by himself, provided the whole could be done with the cordial approbation and co-operation of the people, an informal meeting was called by the Junior Pastor to make all necessary arrangements. The meeting was fully attended, and but one feeling pervaded it. It was this: We cannot be denied the privilege of celebrating the approaching Semi-Centennial Anniversary, with services appropriate to the *day* we honor, and the *man* we venerate.

It was determined to invite numerously, clergymen, civilians, and friends from abroad; and to provide adequate entertainment for some hundreds of guests.

The following gentlemen were chosen to act as a Committee of Arrangements.

SAMUEL WARNER, Jr., Chairman.

Nathan Barrett,	David Fisher,
Edwin E. Blake,	Benjamin Hawes,
Thomas S. Cobb,	William S. Ide,
Daniel A. Cook,	Edwin Ide,
Meletiah Everett,	Horace James,
Daniel I. Felt,	Preston Pond,
Silas P. Fisher,	Handel Pond,
Calvin Fisher, Jr.,	Benjamin N. Shepard,
Hiram B. Fisher,	Curtis Stone,

A still larger Committee of Ladies was chosen, in aid of the Gentlemen.

Thomas S. Cobb was chosen Secretary.

Daniel I. Felt was chosen Treasurer.

Horace James was chosen Committee of Correspondence.

Curtis Stone was chosen to attend to the preparation and furnishing of the Tables.

Francis Plympton was chosen to prepare and distribute Tickets to the entertainment.

Samuel Warner, Jr., Esq., was chosen President of the Day.

Calvin Fisher, Jr., was chosen Chief Marshall.

Under the supervision of the several gentlemen above named, assist-

ed by many others of both sexes, who cheerfully and enthusiastically lent a helping hand, the arrangements were all successfully completed. And it is due to each of them to say that they discharged their duties with distinguished fidelity and promptness.

The day of Jubilee arrived. The weather was delightful. The church was filled to its utmost capacity. A multitude of the Sons of Wrentham, and many connected with them by marriage, "or other agreeable associations," were gathered in their childhood's home to do honor to him who, from their earliest recollection, had ministered at the altar of God.

ORDER OF EXERCISES

AT THE

Semi-Centennial Anniversary

OF THE SETTLEMENT OF

REV. ELISHA FISK,

WRENTHAM, JUNE 12, 1849,

Commencing at 10 o'clock, A. M., in the Meeting House.

VOLUNTARY ON THE ORGAN,

BY PROFESSOR HANDEL POND.

INVOCATION,

BY REV. ELAM SMALLEY, D. D.

SINGING,

THE OLD EASTER ANTHEM,

"The Lord is risen indeed. Hallelujah."

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES,

BY REV. CALVIN DURFEE.

SINGING,

152d SELECT HYMN. [TUNE, GANGES.]

Now for a hymn of praise to God!
Ye trophies of a Saviour's blood,
Join the sweet choir above;
All your harmonious accents bring,
Wake every high celestial string,
To chant redeeming love.

Ere God pronounced creation good,
Or bade the vast unbounded flood
Through fixed channels run;
Ere light from ancient chaos sprung,
Or angels Earth's formation sung,
He chose us in his Son.

Then was the covenant ordered sure,
Through endless ages to endure,
By Israel's triune God;
That none his covenant might evade,
With oaths and promises 't was made,
And ratify'd in blood.

God is the refuge of my soul,
Though tempests rage, though billows roll,
And hellish powers assail;
Eternal walls are my defence,
Environed with Omnipotence,
What foe can e'er prevail?

Then let infernal legions roar,
And waste their cursed vengeful power,
My soul their wrath disdains;
In God my refuge I'm secure,
While covenant promises endure,
Or my Redeemer reigns.

PRAYER,

BY REV. TIMOTHY MATHER COOLEY.

SINGING,

ORIGINAL HYMN, BY MRS. J. M. POND.

God of our fathers, deign to hear,
The notes which we their children raise,
Who now with filial awe draw near,
To sing thy love in words of praise.

Our faithful Shepherd thou hast spared,
For half a century to his flock;
Here he hath labored, wept and prayed,
Nor fainted in his weary work.

As watchman, he with wakeful eye,
Mark'd every foe to Zion's weal;
Grieved when he heard the mourner's sigh,
And pitied where he could not heal.

His church hath changed — the first is gone;
Friend followed friend, till all that band
Sleep in the dust; but *one* alone *
Still journeys toward the promised land.

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* Mrs. RUTH GEROULD, the mother of the authoress, who joined this church in the year 1791. A more careful examination of the Records has revealed the fact that there were TWO members of the church then living. The other being Mrs. ESTHER ALEXANDER, who joined in September, 1780, and died February 2, 1850.

Yet often, in this favored place,
Our hearts have felt the Spirit's power;
While from the storehouse of his grace,
Hath fallen many a genial shower.

O Lord, preserve thy servant still;
Strength from on high to him be given;
His soul with light and comfort fill,
While ripening for the bliss of heaven.

SERMON,

BY REV. ELISHA FISK.

PRAYER,

BY REV. ERASTUS MALTBY.

SINGING,

122d PSALM, P. M. [TUNE, LENOX.]

[This Psalm, in singing which the whole Congregation were invited to join, was the only one sung at the ORDINATION of MR. FISK in the year 1799.]

UPWARD I lift mine eyes;
From God is all my aid;
The God who built the skies,
And earth and nature made.
God is the tower
To which I fly;
His grace is nigh,
In every hour.

My feet shall never slide,
And fall in fatal snares;
Since God, my guard and guide,
Defends me from my fears.
Those wakeful eyes,
That never sleep,
Shall Israel keep,
When dangers rise.

No burning heats by day,
Nor blasts of evening air,
Shall take my health away,
If God be with me there.
Thou art my sun,
And thou my shade,
To guard my head
By night or noon.

Hast thou not given thy word
To save my soul from death?
And I can trust my Lord,
To keep my mortal breath.
I'll go and come,
Nor fear to die,
Till, from on high,
Thou call me home.

BENEDICTION,

BY REV. ERASTUS MALTBY.

On the conclusion of the services in the church a procession was formed, and the company marched around the common to the vestry, where was spread out, on twenty-three large tables, an abundant and excellent

COLLATION.

The Ladies, with their usual good taste and ingenuity, had handsomely decorated the hall with evergreens and flowers. Behind the President's chair, enclosed in a wreath of green, were the figures "1799." And on the wall in front, in the same style,

"JUBILEE, JUNE 12, 1849."

The Tables were laid with excellent taste, and crowned with a profusion of good things. The Ladies were in readiness to attend upon the guests, and all concurred in the opinion that they were brighter and more beautiful, as they were certainly more admired, than all the splendid boquets they had arranged. It is not often that the young ladies of Wrentham are surpassed in taste and skill in decorations of this kind.

SAMUEL WARNER, JR., Esq., presided at the tables, and by his ready and spirited address, added much to the enjoyment of the day.

REV. ELISHA FISK, the REV. DRS. COOLEY, IDE and POOR, and REV. MR. JAMES were seated on either hand of the President of the Day. On the table before them was a large cranberry tart, made by Mrs. LAURA HAWES, and Mrs. ESTHER COBB, on the face of which was the following inscription, in raised letters of pastry; —

"WITH US HALF A CENTURY, YET BELOVED."

"THEY WHO TRUST IN THE LORD SHALL NOT WANT ANY GOOD THING."

There was also a pudding there, made by Miss ABBY BRASTOW, and baked in a dish used for the same purpose at the ordination of Mr. FISK, fifty years ago.

After the company had taken their places at the tables, to the number of four or five hundred, a blessing was implored by Rev. Dr. IDE, and all partook of the Collation. The clatter of knives and forks was at its height, and the cheerful hum of animated conversation, in a hundred little groups of friendship, filled the hall, when the President of the Day arrested the attention of the audience, and remarked that he was very unwilling to break in so soon upon the occupation in which the company seemed so pleasantly employed; but he was reminded that in a little more than half an hour the coaches for the cars must leave the door; and it was a matter of great interest to us to hear a few words from our city friends and others who must take passage in them. He would therefore refrain from making any introductory remarks, which might be expected from him were there time, in view of the honorable situation which it was his privilege to occupy. He chose rather to open the way for some Speeches and Remarks from our distinguished guests, by offering the following sentiment:

Our Venerable Pastor. While we bless heaven for so long sustaining him in the ministry among us, we do not forget that this Jubilee does not release us from our obligations.

The *Senior Pastor* of the church and society, having already occupied nearly two hours in delivering his Discourse, playfully remarked that although he was not weary, it was now time for others to speak. And accordingly the *Junior Pastor* made a brief response on his behalf to this complimentary toast. He announced himself happy in being permitted to do whatever he could, publicly or in private, to promote the good feeling of this occasion, and a proper observance of the day. This was an anniversary in which he took enthusiastic delight. He felt it an honor — a great honor — to minister to a people who had retained and loved a pastor *for fifty years.* He believed that their affection was *not divided now;* but that the people had hearts large enough to embrace both the pastors — the Patriarch and the youth — and love them both with a true and unceasing affection. He concluded by offering this sentiment:

The Clergymen of our Metropolis. Eminent for learning, piety and eloquence; a little of the latter article would be acceptable on the present occasion.

Rev. E. N. Kirk, of Mount Vernon Church, Boston, responded to the call, and remarked that he came here under a wrong impression; supposing, from too casual a reading of his invitation, that this was a *town* celebration,* in reference to the first settlement of the white man on this spot. To that point his thoughts had been directed ever since the splendid celebration in Berkshire. He was, however, none the less happy to mingle in the services of this occasion. We need in this country to undo some of the incidental consequences of our Revolution. The mother was so unkind and unjust toward her thriving child, as to make a separation necessary. But in making such a separation, it was impossible to avoid breaking some ties which are not only compatible with our independent position, but even essential to our progress. America, in assuming the attitude of hostility to Great Britain, broke herself for the time, too entirely from the *past*, and exaggerated the sentiment of personal independence. We need not reverence an opinion because it was held by a thousand men, a thousand years ago. But, society can no more dispense with the experience of past ages, than the man can dispense with the experience of childhood. We are a people

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* The town of Wrentham was first settled in 1661. Mr. *Samuel Shears* was the first white inhabitant. His daughter *Mehitable* was the first person born here. The town being originally included within the limits of Dedham, was separately incorporated Oct. 15, 1673, consisting at the time of sixteen families. As early as 1670, the Rev. *Samuel Mann*, a graduate of Harvard in 1665, became their minister. He labored with them forty-nine years until his death, May 22, 1719. For some reason, it does not clearly appear what, no church was organized until April 13, 1692, twenty-two years after the commencement of Mr. *Mann's* ministry, and ten years after the erection of the first house of worship. Rev. *Henry Messinger*, who was graduated at Harvard in 1717, was pastor of the church from Dec. 5, 1719, till March 30, 1750, the date of his death. He was succeeded Dec. 5, 1750 by Rev. *Joseph Bean*, also a graduate of Harvard University in 1748, who died Dec. 12, 1784. Rev. *David Avery*, a graduate of Yale College in 1769, was settled May 25, 1786, and dismissed April 21, 1794, leaving the church in a divided state, which prevented the settlement of another pastor till June 12, 1799, when Rev. *Elisha Fisk*, the present senior pastor, a graduate of Brown University, 1795, was ordained. Rev. *Horace James*, graduated at Yale College, 1840, was ordained a pastor of the church Nov. 1, 1843.

living little in the present, less in the past. Our strong tendencies toward "bettering our condition" give spring, energy and shrewdness. If it went far enough, and aimed sufficiently high, it would make us truly a great and a christian people. But even then we should need to recall continually the men and the scenes of former days, to complete the circle of our knowledge, and to perfect our own characters. In this view Paul drew out the biographical sketches in the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews.

In this view, there is a peculiar value to be attached to celebrations like that which has brought us together. England has its festivals and its holidays; the Roman church has many also that strongly elicit the social and the patriotic feelings. Our fathers saw so full evidence of the tendency of such days, being fixed and obligatory, to promote superstition and priestly power, that they abolished them entirely. But it is fully in accordance with the genius of our institutions, that there be voluntary appointments by the people of such local or national celebrations as may tend to perpetuate the memory of our fathers; the recollection of the principles which lay at the foundation of all their civil and religious legislation; the story of their sacrifices and struggles. The beneficial effects, may be many. It is always good to remember what God has done. The memory of good men is a gallery of portraits, hung round with faces that seem to invite and animate us to every good purpose, and to full faith in God. The reviving of foundation principles, in the hearing of each succeeding generation, is good. We need, too, in this land, a veneration for old age. "And I confess," said he, "I rejoice that the occasion which has convened us, is the celebration of a minister's settlement in the pastoral office fifty years ago. I am happy to add my tribute of respect to grey hairs, crowning him who has so long served the Lord and his people. We shall never be truly a great people unless our veneration for age, and our domestic affections are strongly developed; and the love of home is tenderly cherished.

But, Sir, the time is short, and I must give way to others. As I had mistaken somewhat the nature of this occasion, I am happy to see my brother Adams here, who is fully competent to correct all mistakes, and make amends for my deficiencies.

Rev. N. Adams, D. D., of Essex Street Church, Boston, arose and said:

"*Mr. Chairman.* It is sufficiently trying, to speak after such an orator, but to correct his mistakes, is an additional calamity. I will add my expression of deep interest with the occasion, adopting all which my brother has now said. As I look upon this crowded room, and feel the beating of the *one heart* which moves this large concourse of people, and think that all this deep emotion and interest are directed towards that one beloved man, the aged, faithful minister of half a century, I feel a new impulse in the ministerial work; I am assured, that steadfastness and fidelity will meet with a reward in the consciences and hearts of men; I shall labor with fresh zeal and alacrity, at the thought of this delightful occasion, and of the encouragement which it speaks to those ministers who love and serve their flocks. This day is one of the

pleasantest of my life. To plunge into such a tide of feeling, is next to bathing one's weary soul in seas of heavenly rest. It is most truly refreshing.

But not having yet passed the meridian of such a ministerial age, as the Senior Pastor has now attained, I confess that my thoughts have turned with deep interest, towards the Junior Pastor; and as an expression of our common interest in him, I beg leave to offer the following sentiment:

May the mantle of *Elisha*, be like that of Elijah, and rest upon his successor.

The President of the Day then gave as a sentiment:

Our Common Schools.

The eyes of the assembly were turned at once toward Rev. B. Sears, D. D., of Newton, the accomplished Secretary of the Board of Education in this State, who briefly responded, nearly in the following terms:

It is no doubt owing to the official position which I chance to occupy, that I am called up on this occasion, — a position which the interests of education and the labors of my predecessor in office have rendered important. It is highly gratifying to me to be invited to participate in the festivities of this day, to honor the venerable pastor who has maintained his position with so much credit to himself, and so much benefit to others for the period of half a century; and this pleasure is increased, by seeing at the side of our honored guest, my venerated teacher, whose jubilee was not long since celebrated.* In the discourse to which we have just listened, we learned, what was already well known to most of us, that the *church* and the *school* divided the cares and labors of the pastor; and we know the same to be true of our friend from Granville. Nor are these peculiar cases. In Massachusetts, the church and the school have ever been united by a common interest; and never may the day come, when they shall be estranged from each other. It would be difficult to say which of the two is the greatest gainer by the union. I have thus indicated the topic on which I had intended to speak. But I perceive that only ten minutes remain for nearly as many speakers. Justice to them and to you, requires me to waive all further remark; and I close by offering this sentiment:

The Family, the School, and the Church. May they ever remain, as they have hitherto been, a sacred sisterhood, bound together, not by force of statute, but by natural affinity.

Rev. Mr. James then offered the following:

Rev. Dr. Cooley, *of Granville.* Honored in having trained for usefulness, such men as the last speaker. Honored in being the only man present, who has celebrated his jubilee. Trebly honored in standing nearly first among the clergymen of Massachusetts, in respect to longevity in the pastorate.†

* Rev. *T. M. Cooley*, D. D., of Granville, whose jubilee occurred Feb. 3, 1846.

† A note received from Dr. *Pierce*, bearing date June 8, 1849, stated that there were living at that time, *eight* members of the Massachusetts Convention of Ministers who had survived a ministry of fifty years among their people.

1. The Rev. *Daniel Dana*, D. D., born in Ipswich, 24th July, 1771, a graduate of D. C. in 1788, had his Jubilee in Newburyport, Nov. 19, 1844.

Dr. Cooley responded in very brief terms, expressing his unmingled gratification at being able to be present, and participate in the services. He alluded gratefully to the goodness of God to himself and others who had been long in the work of the ministry; and closed by wishing continued prosperity and happiness, both temporal and spiritual, to this people and to their pastors.

Mr. James next proposed the following toast:

The Originator and first Editor of the Christian Observatory. Standing on his "watchtower," we have often heard him make answer to the question, "What of the night?" We beg leave to ask him: "Watchman! what of *this day?*"

This brought to his feet, the Rev. A. W. M'Clure, who arose smiling in a remote corner of the hall, and commenced by acknowledging that for once he was fairly *cornered.* He said that this was an occasion of remarkable interest to the great concourse of ministers and others from abroad, as well as to this ancient and flourishing congregation. It was emphatically "a good time," exciting the best sensibilities of the pious mind. He was glad to be here, and see under these favorable circumstances, the man to whose cautious, laborious, and affectionate ministry, this favored people is indebted, under God, for half a century of peace and social prosperity, for many powerful revivals of religion, and for its present harmony and pleasing prospects. I was reminded, (said Mr. M'C.) while listening to his modest statements, of a "good saying" of the celebrated Hannah Adams, the distinguished authoress, who was the first of the lifeless tenants of the cemetery at Mount Auburn. She was for having an addition made to the renowned New England Primer, where it is asked, "Who was the meekest man? Who was the most patient man? Who was the strongest man? Who was the wisest man?" and the like. Her amendment was: "Who is the most prudent man? Parson Fisk of Wrentham!"

I was also greatly interested, Sir, in listening to his animated sketch of the violent excitements of the almost forgotten "Averyan war," as it was called, all of whose active combatants have departed from the field of life. I could not but reflect upon the transitory nature of the strongest exercises of human passions. How little can we conceive of the worlds

2. Rev. *Timothy M. Cooley*, D. D. Born in Granville, March 13, 1772, a graduate of Y. C., in 1792, had his Jubilee on the 27th and 28th of Aug. 1845, not the date of his ordination, which was Feb. 3d, 1796; but the date of his first sermons as candidate there.

3. Rev. *John Fiske*, D. D. Born in Warwick, Oct. 26, 1770, a graduate of D. C. in 1791, had his Jubilee, Oct. 26, 1846.

4. Rev. *John Pierce*, D. D. Born in Dorchester, July 14, 1773, a graduate of H. U. in 1793, had his Jubilee March 15, 1847.

5. Rev. *Isaac Braman*. Born in Norton, July 5, 1770, a graduate of H. U. in 1794, had his Jubilee, June 17, 1847.

6. Rev. *Thomas Snell*, D. D. Born in Cummington, Nov. 21, 1774, a graduate of D.C. in 1795, had his Jubilee, June 27, 1848.

7. Rev. *Oliver Cobb*, D. D., of Rochester, B. U., 1796, Jubilee occurred Feb, 5, 1849.

8. Rev. *Theophilus Packard*, D. D. Born in Bridgewater, March 4th, 1769, a graduate of D. C. in 1796, had his Jubilee Feb. 20th, 1849.

Of the above, the *fourth* and *seventh* are now deceased, and Rev. *Elisha Fisk* is to be *added* to the list of surviving Jubilants; and still more recently, Rev. *Mr. Kendall*, of Plymouth.

on worlds of heart-rending sorrow and distracting strife, which have passed away into the land of forgetfulness and silence. "Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun." *

I believe, Sir, there are now living in Massachusetts, *eight* Congregational pastors who have preached their fiftieth anniversary sermon. This number will not seem small, when it is considered that of the four hundred and fifty Orthodox churches existing in the Commonwealth, *full one half have been organized within twenty-five years.* This remarkable fact is not duly taken into account, when estimating the average length of the pastorates of our ministers.

But, Sir, lest I should deprive you of the pleasure of hearing others, who are better able than myself to entertain you, I will even hold my peace.

The time being now very nearly expended before we must part with a number of our guests, Mr. James hurriedly gave the following:

Father Holmes, *of New Bedford!* The cars will start in five minutes! Shall we hear his *alarm whistle* before they go?

Mr. Holmes fixed his keen eye upon the giver of this toast, and said, the lively imagination of my young brother has attributed to me a vocal power which I never claimed to possess. I am quite sure that were I to *whistle*, this audience would be more *alarmed* than they ever were before. Whistle, Sir? I am hardly able even to *speak.* True, I cannot say, with my brother who has preceded me, that I am literally cornered. My condition is even more distressing. I can say *nothing;* for brother Fisk has said *every thing*, and said *every thing about every thing.*

Yet when I look about this hall, so beautifully decorated, and these tables, so tastefully arranged and bounteously supplied, in all which the hand of *woman* is visible, and remember that the sermon told us that the ladies, by the avails of their labor, purchased the organ in the church, I am not surprised that so many professional men have found their *wives in Wrentham.* Solomon's notions of a good wife, would have led him to send his ships here for wives, had he lived in our times.

* An allusion being here made to the troublous times which preceded Mr. Fisk's ministry in this place, he having stated in the body of the discourse, p. 6, that there were forty-eight candidates who preceded himself; it may be a matter of interest to insert an item found among our church papers. It is verbatim as follows:

"The ministers that preached in our meeting house after the dismission of Mr. Avery, in the year 1793. From 1793, to July 1796, down to Mr. Messer. And after Mr. Packard no account to the present settlement; but there were a number more. Mr. Carrill, Mr. Green, Mr. Fobes. Mr Ripley, Mr. Woodbridge, Mr. Emmons, Mr. Stone, Mr. Crane, Mr. Fish, Mr. Judson, Mr Elias Fisher, Mr. Kendall, of Weston, Mr. Kendall, of Foxborough, Mr. Taft, Mr. White, Mr. Read, Mr. Tufts, Brother, Mr. How, Mr. Sumner, Mr. Daggett, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Green, Mr. Riddel, Mr. Fredenburg, Mr. Brown, Mr. Worthington, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Spring, Mr. Pinneo, Mr. Jabez Fisher, Mr. Remington, Mr. Whitney, Mr. Richmond, Mr. Ward, Mr. Prentiss, Mr. Muzzy, Mr. Daggett, Mr. Mason, Mr. Elliot, Mr. Williams, Mr. Vose, Mr. Morey, Mr. Cummins, Mr. Chickering, Mr. Preston. Mr Wibler, Mr. Clark, Mr. Kellogg, Mr. Howard. Mr. Maxcy, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Alden, Mr. Hitchcock, Mr. Messer, Mr. Dunbar, Mr. Hill, Mr. Packard.

By E. Ware."

Yonder I see "JUBILEE." In olden time, on such anniversaries, if a servant chose to abide, his ear was bored through at the post of the door, and he was to abide forever. So let it be with the venerated man who has served as the minister of Christ fifty years, till his jubilee has come. *Bore* his ear through with *kindness*, and let him abide *forever*.

Mr. James announced, at the conclusion of Mr. Holmes' remarks, that the drivers of the coaches were becoming exceedingly impatient; nevertheless knowing them to be men of excellent good nature, he ventured to give one more sentiment:

The Conductors of the Religious Press. We are aware that they can speak with *types;* do they also possess the gift of *tongues?*

In reply to this, REV. MARTIN MOORE, of the Puritan Recorder, arose and said:

Mr. President. I suppose that the sentiment just given calls upon me for a response. We, who are engaged in conducting the religious press, feel a deep interest in occasions like these. One part of our work is to record events similar to this. The reminiscences of fifty years of a pastor's life furnish materials for our columns that will be read by thousands with deep interest. It is true that your venerable pastor has labored half a century in this quiet and beautiful village, and the results of his labors are recorded on high; but the whole amount of good that he has accomplished will not be fully developed until the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed. This church has always firmly adhered to the doctrines of the Puritans. At this day it cleaves to those great principles that were brought over in the May Flower, which have made New England what it is. The God of the Pilgrims has not left himself without a witness. Under the ministrations both of the Senior and Junior Pastors, he has borne witness to these truths. They have been written upon the hearts of many who have fallen asleep, and of many who remain until this day. It is a part of the duty of the religious press to record such triumphs of victorious grace. I venerate the Puritans, and pledge the religious press to exert its influence to perpetuate their virtues. I give as a sentiment:

The Memory of our Puritan Fathers. May the present generation rise up and call them blessed.

REV. ERASMUS D. MOORE, and REV. I. N. TARBOX, Editors of The Congregationalist, were also present as representatives of the New England Christian Press.

Up to this point in the entertainment the speakers had been called up in rapid succession, and crowded into the smallest space of time. It is impossible for us to retain in this report all the humor and raciness of the several speeches made. The flow of eloquence and good feeling was uninterrupted; and all felt it a sort of relief, of minds intensely excited, when, after the departure of some fifteen or twenty of our friends for the cars, it was requested that for a few moments the company would resume the knife and fork service. It was a matter of regret that, for want of time, we could not hear from several other gentlemen who were present, and who left unwillingly at this early hour. We were sorry to part with our friends, but we confess to a peculiar

yearning towards those speeches in their pockets, which missed the occasion, poor unfortunates! and will never see the light.

The company were next entertained by the reading of the following letter, received from the Rev. John P. Cleveland, D. D., of Providence, R. I., directed to Rev. Horace James, the Committee of Correspondence.

Providence, Monday, June 11th.

My Dear Brother:—Your kind invitation to be with you to-morrow, came Friday afternoon.

The moment I saw your arrangements announced, I said, "God willing, I will go to that Celebration." But oh! these "sober second thoughts," how they will upset all our most delightful schemes! They are as unwelcome, for aught I know, to *us* as to the political aspirants. The very next day, after I had swallowed this sweet cup of anticipation, it came all over me, most unbidden and unwished for, that on the self-same 12th of June, begins the meeting of the Consociation of Rhode Island, in the very city where I dwell, and, that being Moderator of the last meeting, an immovable necessity is laid on me to be present at the opening hour, 10 A. M., and being, (unhappily for all concerned,) the *preacher* for the present year, the same necessity chains me to the city, till after 9 o'clock at night, by which time I presume the guests as well as the cloth will have been removed from your table. I have tried every way to get over this difficulty, but it wont move an inch for me. I have resorted to Astronomy and Geography, but in vain. We are less than twenty miles apart, and the sun rises and sets so nearly at the same time in Providence and Wrentham, (I beg pardon, I should have said, Wrentham and Providence,) I may as well call it the *same day* in both places, and submit to my fate, as quietly as possible.

There are more reasons than you know of, why I have a right to be with you.

That holy man, whose name I bear, my venerated uncle, was long the pastor of the church in your Northern precinct.

When a boy, I used to go with my mother, to see her mother in Canterbury, Connecticut, and you must know that Wrentham was the first town I ever slept in, away from home. It was a memorable night to me. I was sent over from my uncle's to water the horse at a Mr. Mann's; it was a well with a windlass, and having never seen one before, I had some fears that the rapid rotations, after I threw off the stone, would whirl me, some how or other, to the bottom. This was in October, 1814. In October, 1844, that same family of *Mann's,* (though most of them were *women,*) met that same timid verdant boy at Cincinnati, grown to manhood, and almost grey, as their *Pastor,* the parties having never seen each other in the thirty intervening years.

I distinctly remember that at that time I soberly supposed Canterbury and Byfield to be *very near* the two ends of the continent, and Wrentham to be *exactly* in the centre. Why should n't I, when it was the half-way house of the only journey I had ever travelled, or conceived of?

But I must stop this rambling. I do, indeed, bless God for all his goodness to his church in Wrentham, and for his loving kindness to

her pastors, especially to the venerable man, whose Jubilee comes off to-morrow.

If you will allow me to offer you a sentiment, a pure cold water one, I will detain you no longer, except to say, that I thank you cordially for your letter, although when it came it was but a real aggravation. Now, then, for the sentiment:

The Colleague Pastors at Wrentham. Elisha the prophet, and *James* the apostle; a happy illustration of the unity of the *old* and *new* dispensations; may the union not be dissolved, till the *former* has also attended the Semi-Centennial of the *latter.*

Your affectionate brother, JOHN P. CLEVELAND.

P. S. I do not feel certain that Father Fisk will consent to stay quite so long as I have proposed, but I don't think my toast will be in his way, when his "*nunc dimittis*" is well sung.

After a brief interval, the President of the Day recalled the attention of the assembly, by giving the following:

The fair City of Worcester. The heart of our Commonwealth. Her voice should not be silent on this occasion.

This drew forth some very interesting remarks and reminiscences from REV. E. SMALLEY, D. D., of Worcester. We regret our inability to report them verbatim. He expressed the pleasure it gave him to mingle with us on this occasion. He had enjoyed, for a long period, an acquaintance with this people, and their aged pastor; and to meet them under such circumstances as the present, was highly satisfactory to him. He alluded, in a very happy and entertaining manner, to his first acquaintance with Father Fisk. "I recollect," said he, "as if it had been yesterday, my first recitation to him in the Latin Grammar, when he was my teacher. The marks he made in my book are still there. The emphatic sotto voce inarticulate sound, which he uttered ever and anon during the recitation, expressive of his gratification and approval, still murmurs like distant music in my ears. His hale and hearty appearance at that time, his freshness of countenance and vigor of person, I well remember, for they made a strong impression on me. But truth compels me to say, that succeeding years have not greatly changed him. In fact I can scarcely see that he appears to be a different man to-day from what he was then. I could safely affirm an almost exact identity. It is a matter of astonishment to myself, and one on which I congratuate him, that Time has written so few wrinkles on his brow.

The speaker next alluded to the honor which the minister and people here had mutually reflected; he remaining with them as a pastor during so long a period, and being highly respected to the last, and they cheerfully retaining him so long, and always treating him so handsomely and liberally.

In closing, Dr. S. referred to another meeting which would ere long take place before the great tribunal on high, at which we should all be present. He offered his most cordial congratulations to those now assembled, and hoped, through the grace of God, they might all attain to the saints' everlasting rest.

Esquire Warner then gave as a sentiment:

The venerable Dr. Pierce, *of Brookline.* Though absent, he has sent us tokens of his sympathy.

At the mention of this name the whole audience seemed subdued and pensive. The Brookline Sage was well known among us, and was a universal favorite with the people. It was a severe disappointment to them not to see him at the celebration. The following letter, received from him a few days previous, was then read:

Brookline, 8th June, 1849.

Your kind letter of sympathy, dear Brother James, sensibly affected me.

I thank you for the invitation to Brother Fisk's Jubilee, to which, as a member of the Committee of Arrangements, you invite me. Nothing but the low state of my health forbids my compliance. I have indeed been reduced to a skeleton, almost to the gates of death, and nearly within hearing of celestial symphonies. But I now seem convalescent. There is some prospect that I may have a short reprieve. I bless God, in Christ Jesus, that I have been enabled to say, through a protracted illness, I trust from the heart, "The will of the Lord be done!" My thoughts will be much with you, on the 12th instant. Give me leave to suggest, as a suitable sentiment on that festive occasion:

The Jubilee of our venerated pastor, the Rev. Elisha Fisk; a rare instance, in modern times, of durability in the christian ministry. May the young colleague, the Rev. Horace James, attain to a like longevity in office; and may both senior and junior pastors, having finished their course and kept the faith, meet the approving sentence of their final Judge, "Well done, good and faithful servants, ye have been faithful over a few things, I will make you rulers over many things, enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

So prays your affectionate friend and brother,

John Pierce.

On the morning of the 12th of June, Dr. Pierce kindly sent to Mr. Fisk, to grace the tables, a beautiful boquet of Flowers, which was placed upon the central table, immediately before the President of the Day. It was brought by Rev. Joseph Haven, Jr., of Brookline, accompanied by the following note.

Brookline, 12th June, 1849.

This bright collection of flowers is presented to the Rev. Elisha Fisk, of Wrentham, on his day of Jubilee, by his affectionate fellow Jubilant, the Rev. John Pierce, of Brookline, signifying, "As for man, his days are as grass; *as a flower of the field*, so he flourisheth;" suggesting the beautiful exhortation of the blessed Jesus, "*Consider the lilies of the field*, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these;" and, above all, exciting the aspirations of the devout after those amaranthine flowers in the paradise of God, "which ne'er grow, which ne'er decay;" but which, in the "wreck of matter and the

crush of worlds," shall, in the bright light of God's countenance, flourish in immortal bloom. For

"If God hath made this earth so fair,
Where sin and death abound;
How beautiful beyond compare,
Must Paradise be found."

Wishing you the joy of an unclouded day, I am your friend and brother, JOHN PIERCE.

It was this boquet of flowers to which allusion was made in the toast last read. They were indeed pleasing tokens of his sympathy, as well as affecting emblems of human frailty. In explanation of the sentiment, Rev. Mr. James held up the flowers in sight of the assembly, and said: We are deprived of the pleasure of seeing with us to-day the venerable form of our good Dr. Pierce, we are not permitted to hear his great voice, or receive his hearty affectionate greetings. But we have here an appropriate emblem of himself. These sweet smiling flowers, how like the radiance of his benevolent countenance! and fresh, as the flow of his spirits; — culled under his direction, and tastefully arranged by his own hand, they are indeed beautiful; but not more so than his snow-white locks, and cheerful, benignant, graceful old age. May the Lord bless him, and kindly lengthen out his life these many years. And let the day soon come when more of our fellow men shall possess the qualities of that remarkable man, the PATRIARCH OF BROOKLINE.

SAMUEL WARNER, JR., Esq., gave the following:

Though we have been somewhat shorn of our strength by the departure of our Boston friends, yet it must be acknowledged that we have suffered no diminution of our *Powers*.

This brought to his feet, somewhat unexpectedly to himself, the REV. DENNIS POWERS, of S. Abington, who made observations as follows:

Mr. President. This day, to me, is replete with the most tender and thrilling recollections. Twenty years ago, I came into this town, an uneducated, diffident, tall and green New Hampshire boy. I felt a reverence for every *boy* in the street. My intellectual infirmities were many, and I am afraid this speech will prove that but too few have passed away.

There come to my mind, as I look upon this scene, grateful recollections of noble men, whom our eyes behold not here to enjoy this festivity to day. Where are the Day's, the Fisher's, the Shepard's, the Blake's, the Hawes's, the Ware's, the Porter's, and Sanders's, and many others who were pillars and strong rods in this Society in their day? Truly

"We're not *all* here; —
Some are away, the dead ones dear,
Who thronged with us, this ancient Church.
Some like a night-flash passed away;
And some sank lingering day by day; —
The quiet grave-yard — some lie there,
And cruel Ocean has his share.
We're *not* all here."

I was much interested in certain allusions made in the discourse of this day, referring to the founding of the Academy, and to the charities

of the Ladies in this Society. And, Sir, I cannot help believing, that the combination of such influences as Education and female excellence have done much to render permanent and useful the pastoral relation here. And it is from these influences, above all others earthly, that any minister may hope to attain the fiftieth anniversary of his settlement among any one people. If I might venture a sentiment, which I deem appropriate to this metropolis of bonnet making, it should be this:

The Ladies of Wrentham. While with honorable taste and industry they have adorned the *heads* of their own sex, by their noble charities, they have improved the *heads* and the *hearts* of the other. *Their works praise them.* May these influences continue and increase in the coming semi-centenary which this day begins, and, like a nurturing atmosphere bless the pastoral relation here for fifty years to come. Allow me, Sir, in this sentiment, with which I close:

The present Pastors of this Church. The *Senior*, having been "as a nail fastened in a *sure place*," in this respect, may the *Junior* be like him.

Esq. Warner then observed: We are happy to see there is still "another *Richmond* in the field."

Upon which the Rev. T. T. Richmond, of Medfield, arose and said:

I cannot agree with you, Mr. President, just at this time; and presume there are many others here who do not. For I know not how to address such an intelligent assembly as this, in a way to interest or profit them. But I would remark, Sir, that, while the venerable senior pastor of this church was addressing us to day, although he spoke of changes that have transpired during his ministry, it appeared to me that the wheels of time had stood still for a while with respect to him. I first saw him about twenty-five years ago, and heard him preach frequently. His appearance indicated that he had lived many years in this world, but then he was vigorous and strong. I met him but seldom after this, until about 1843; when I found him the same man, with no more wrinkles upon his brow, or gray hairs upon his head. And *to-day* he has witnessed that his eye has scarcely grown dim, or his natural force abated.

What a blessing to have one in the ministry so long, one so highly favored and well sustained, and whose experience and counsel we can have from his own lips, for encouragement and profit.

But, Sir, there was another consideration that affected me more deeply. Our venerable friend has been the stated minister of the gospel to this people, he has told us, for fifty years. What an influence this must have had upon them. Important changes have taken place during that period, in the Town, in the State, in the Country, and in the World. And yet all the while this influence has been extending itself, and affecting families and individuals. There were aged persons here when he was first settled, who soon passed away. Among the first duties he was called to perform, was that of visiting them in their declining years. It devolved upon him to stand beside their dying beds, point them to heaven, and then see them die. There were others in the prime of life, like himself, vigorous and active. Some of them found an early grave.

He has grown up with others; and with some is now aged. All the way through their lives his ministry has been acting upon them; forming their intellectual characters, developing their social virtues, giving a right tone to their moral feelings, and throwing around them the cords of religion that have bound them to the high and ennobling principle of true godliness. The influence of such a ministry, however, stops not here. It is not confined to one generation, nor one world. Our friend will ere long finish his labors on earth and go to his rest. But his influence will live The streams that started and moved with so much promise, under his personal direction, will widen and deepen, as they flow out upon society. Cords, which he touched himself, will vibrate with increased power, and will extend and reach and bless communities he never saw.

But in another world, all at last will meet; and how many, after he has taken his seat at the foot of the throne, will come up there, one after another, and sit down with him; persons who were converted to Christ under his ministry, and who, encouraged and strengthened by his example and counsel, will help swell the eternal anthems of the redeemed. I close, Sir, with this sentiment:

A Gospel Ministry of fifty years. We see some of its happy fruits to-day. We shall see yet more illustrious results at the great Jubilee in heaven.

Mr. James next volunteered the following:

Rev. Daniel Poor, *of Ceylon.* A veteran, time-worn Missionary, still in his prime. We welcome him among us, on this joyous occasion. He has come from across the ocean to address us. But some of us have seen him here before, and recollect *the errand on which he came.*

Dr. Poor was so overcome, by this unexpected allusion to the past, that for some moments he could not speak. But becoming composed, the arose and said something within 360 degrees of the following:

Mr. President and Ladies and Gentlemen. I am indeed happy in being with you on this joyful Anniversary. I love to attend and engage in such celebrations as the present. And I am more than usually gratified to-day, from a recollection of the fact, that this is a Jubilee in my personal history; it being fifty years since the time of my first obtaining hope in the mercy of Christ our Saviour. That was the period and the event which gave a new direction to my life, and led me at length to devote myself to Missionary labor in a foreign field. My heart was early set upon doing good to perishing *India.* Its destitution with respect to spiritual privileges, it being wholly given up to idolatry, powerfully wrought upon me. It was a fire in my bones. With other beloved brethren, some of them now gone to their rewards, we left our native land in 1815. I parted from my mother, never expecting to see her again. She embraced me affectionately, and from her moistened eyes there fell upon me two tears, one of sympathy, and one of *joy.* She had no wish to detain me, but cheerfully gave me up to Christ and the Church. But I will not tax your patience, Sir, in this connection, with the trials and vicissitudes of a Missionary's life. It seems rather to be expected of me, that some allusion be made to a former

visit to your pleasant village, made before my embarkation for India. This was my first journey of exploration and discovery into these parts. It was in the lovely month of June. Every thing looked bright. It was the witching season of the year. I was kindly received by friends. And not only the freshness of the foliage and beauty of the scenery, but *some other things that occurred before I left*, made me feel that *all* of Paradise *was not lost.*

I am happy to say, that my present visit is wholly in keeping with the former one in 1812, and this is saying not a little.

Dr. Poor then alluded to the "Ladies Reading and Braiding Society," established here in 1812, chiefly through the exertions of Miss *Susan Bulfinch*, who was then an instuctress in the Academy in this place, and who afterwards became Mrs. *Poor*. This Society, some of whose original members are still living, was instrumental of great good, and became a parent Society to many others. Mrs. Poor subsequently held correspondence with some of its members, and for many years it sent valuable aid to the Mission at Ceylon. The fruits of the timely, efficient, and faithful efforts of my late wife (continued Dr. Poor) are visibly manifest in our Mission. In the department of *female education*, especially, her wisdom, tact and success were remarkable. She first succeeded in enticing into our premises a timid heathen girl, and in inducing her to overcome her fears sufficiently to remain with us and be taught. The circumstances were these. Our boarding-school for *boys* was already full, so that we could take no more ; but we had no heathen *girl* under our care. At this juncture, a father came to the mission house bringing his son, and besought us to take charge of him. We declined doing so, not having room, and he was about to depart disappointed, when Mrs. Poor offered to take the lad, if the parent would bring along with him a *daughter* also. He at first refused, but was at length persuaded to comply with the condition. This girl, who afterwards became a Christian and was named Harriet Newell Ambrose, was very useful to the natives, and her subsequent history is somewhat remarkable. We were obliged to resort to a kind of *stratagem* at first, to secure a class of girls in our boarding-school. We offered to *clothe* them, if they would come and join the school. But in order to convey to you my meaning, it will be necessary to refer to a passage of scripture, in which it is declared that Moses stripped the people *naked ;* that is, he divested them of their *ornaments*. The Orientals do not feel that they are *clad* unless they are arrayed in their ornaments. We therefore offered each little girl a simple ornament for the neck, and it had the desired effect. After this, we found no such inducement necessary. Our female boarding-school has flourished from that day to this, and proved of incalculable advantage to the Mission. Mrs. Poor was always, during her life, its patron and most efficient helper.

Dr. Poor related some interesting incidents, relative to the Mission at Jaffna, in Ceylon, with which he had been connected more than thirty years ; and spoke very feelingly of the changes to which the Mission and himself had been subjected. He closed his highly interesting observations by making a brief but forcible appeal to the audience, to forget

not their obligations to the heathen world. This people, having enjoyed a stated ministry for fifty years, are peculiarly bound to do their part toward furnishing the stated means of grace to the perishing and guilty. "Freely ye have received, freely give."

The foregoing is but an imperfect and feeble outline of Dr. Poor's speech; and will fail to convey any suitable impression of its excellence.

The next toast, read by Mr. James, was as follows:

The Clergymen of Boston; not all gone in the cars. Old Park Street is still represented by one whom we shall claim as being, by matrimonial alliance, a citizen and Son of Wrentham.

The Rev. Andrew L. Stone responded nearly in the following terms:

Mr. Chairman. It is not legitimate with me to take any part in this Jubilee of the Wrenthamites. I am neither a native of Wrentham, (which is my misfortune not my fault,) nor a son of a native. The only link that binds me to these domestic histories, which are recited with so much interest this day, is, that I had the good fortune to win as a bride a daughter of the first organist * in the village church — that other church which was torn down — and of a lady, who was a pupil of that lamented matron,† whom our revered father from Ceylon has so justly and so feelingly eulogized.

The family with which I claim alliance is largely represented here to-day; and it was agreed among us, that if we were publicly insulted on this occasion, I should be commissioned to repel the impertinence; — an office awarded to me, perhaps, because it is conceded that I have done rather more toward handing down to posterity the good qualities of the line than any of the more direct descendants.

But, Sir, had I been a stranger to all the kindreds gathered here, I could not have witnessed the scenes of this day unmoved. Who of us does not envy the feelings of that venerable servant of God, whose second half century among this people dawns so auspiciously to-day. What an untold wealth of happy memories is his, this hour, from this long-unbroken harmony of fellowship. What a rare lot, to retain the affections and confidence of a whole people through so many years and changes. How he must love to think to-day of that enduring attachment to his person and his ministry. The warm hearts that first welcomed him here, are still and cold, but the hearts of their sons and daughters beat around him as warm and true as those that first girded him in these walks. They did not tire of him after a little while; his voice, his face, never grew old to them; they delighted in him after the novelty of his first coming was a thing of the far past. The freshness of their first love, transmitting it from sire to son, they have kept up to this latest hour. Shall any of us have such a history to recite? Who would not covet it for himself?

Most of those who preceded me have made some cordial allusion to the junior colleague. But, Sir, I have a better right than any of them to name him with a brother's affection. We were together in our

* Abijah Fisher, Esq., of New York. † Wife of Rev. Dr. Poor.

youthful times. We walked beneath the classic shades of Yale, in the years when soul is knit to soul. We were not indeed classmates, but we knew each other, and loved each other, and made our voices chime in those halcyon days. I rejoice that we are now so near neighbors, and I am ready to pledge him, across the little distance that separates us, a brother's heart in all his need.

Sir, I desire to keep the impressions of this day as long as I live. The interest of this tender and solemn scene is most affecting to my mind. Nor will it be easy to forget the generous hospitalities of the Ladies of the village, which have made these tables groan with bounties; nor the watchful and assiduous attentions of those also who have graced while they have served the board. So many pleasant associations concurring — this delightful weather, these green fields, clothed with the early summer verdure, this hall, decked with evergreens, must make this day an evergreen in our memories.

At the conclusion of the eloquent remarks of the last gentleman, Mr. James observed, that though he had had the honor to present quite a number of toasts already, he could not, without great injustice to his feelings, refrain from making allusion to one more clergyman, a beloved father in the ministry, and whom all who know him delight to honor. Protracted and painful illness, said he, has laid him aside from public duties for several months. He has our most cordial sympathy in all his bereavements and trials. It delights us to see him here to-day, with health so nearly recovered. I give:

Our venerable Father, the Rev. Jacob Ide, D. D. His *name* is three quarters of an idea. His head is full of whole ones.

The Dr. was forced to rise, in spite of his characteristic modesty, and offered substantially the following observations:

Mr. President. I have some hesitation in replying to the gentleman who has in this flattering manner called me up, because I feel too high a respect for him to prove his declarations untrue, as I am certain I shall do, if I attempt to make a speech. Besides, his error is so much more complimentary to me than the truth would be, I am strongly tempted to let it pass without exposure.

I cannot, however, forbear to express the pleasure which I feel in the exercises of this day. They have vividly revived in my mind many of the associations of youth. The *Psalm* which was sung to-day is one of the first which I ever committed to memory; and the *tune* in which it was sung is the first that I was ever taught to sing. Though I was not present at the ordination of the venerable senior pastor of this church, yet I remember well the day on which it took place. At that time ordinations were deemed very important and interesting transactions. The people generally were anxious to attend them. I recollect one fact, which shows, in some degree, the strength of the feeling which prevailed at that time on this subject. The day before the ordination of the senior pastor in this place, a poor man, far advanced in years, living at a distance of thirteen miles from here, and having no means of conveyance but his own *understandings*, called at the house of my father to borrow a pair of stockings, saying, that he wanted to attend the ordination at Wrentham, and added, "I am determined to go, *even*

if I go without stockings." As it was then the almost universal custom for men of his years to wear small-clothes, this declaration, in connection with the other circumstances of the case, struck me as indicating a very strong inclination to attend.

The Senior Pastor of this church began his ministry just about the time when I began to feel a more than usual interest in the preaching of the gospel, and is one of those whom I was then in the habit of hearing frequently, and with great interest. I was much instructed, and I hope benefited by his early labors. This circumstance made it a peculiar pleasure to me to be located so near him, and has always given me an interest in his person and labors which I cannot feel in every one. I remember, too, with great interest, many of his early associates in the ministry, most of whom have already gone to their reward.

I cannot but feel a respect for the man who can, in these days of excitement and change, retain his standing in the ministry among the same people for fifty years. The ministry is a work of so much inherent difficulty, requiring in him who exercises it traits of character of no ordinary excellence, and these in a great variety, that when it is reputably sustained by one individual in the same place for fifty years, the inference is almost irresistible that there are in that individual's character not only some real excellencies, but a rare combination of them. It is not easy to escape the impression, that he has been amiable in his disposition, conciliating in his manners, industrious and persevering in his labors, and capable of becoming all things to all men. Those who know what a variety of tastes, habits, prejudices and prepossessions prevail among the members of all our religious societies, and consider the fact that what is pleasing to one is often displeasing to another, and that what is looked upon as a faithful discharge of a minister's duty by one, is often considered by others as overstepping the bounds of his appropriate sphere of action, and interfering with what he ought to have nothing to do with, cannot but view the continuance of a man, actively and acceptably engaged in the work of the ministry, in the same place for fifty years, as a matter of great admiration.

I have also a high respect for a people, among whom any minister can, in the faithful discharge of the duties of his office, remain in peace for fifty years. The best of men have their failings. In the course of fifty years there will be, even in a truly godly minister, many things to try the patience of his people. Unless they can sometimes bear with weakness, and overlook mistakes, and even pardon sinful infirmities, the hope of a long and successful ministry among any people must be a vain hope. The continuance of a minister among the same people for half a century, is an exceedingly interesting fact in respect to them as well as him. It indicates a deeper reverence for the sacred office, and a more intelligent and candid consideration of the mutual obligations of minister and people, than is manifest in most of our congregations.

The Fisher Family, having been from the very first highly respectable and numerous in this town, were next called upon for remarks.

Abijah Fisher, Esq., a merchant of New York, arose to speak for the older members of the family. In a strain of very interesting remark, he dwelt upon the good old times when he lived in this his native

place. He was then in the vigor of youth. The old meeting-house in which he worshipped and played the organ, the old oaks upon the common, and many of the old landmarks and familiar things were gone — all gone. The faces and forms of those who were then the old men he now saw not, but had been reading their epitaphs in the cemetery with a melancholy pleasure. All the countenances he met in the street, most of those he now saw before him, were strange to him; all bright, friendly, hospitable and kind, but not *familiar*. There was *one marked exception;* the shepherd of the flock was *the same*. He still remained in appearance what he knew him in youth. His every look and motion was natural, and precisely as of old. He felt that he himself had grown old; and he knew it must be so with his old minister, but he could not see it. By the scenes and occurrences of this day he felt carried back to his boyhood; and he was conscious of a respect for the aged pastor of this church deeper and more heartfelt than he ever entertained before. He concluded, by wishing him happiness and peace all the remnant of his days, and by expressing a continued and unabated interest in this village, in its young minister and his family, in this religious society, in all its people and in all their interests.

The *younger* members of the Fisher Family being called upon, were noticed to turn their eyes involuntarily towards *one* among them, whose standing and scholarship eminently fitted him to reply in their behalf. Whereupon Mr. George P. Fisher, a graduate of Brown University and now a student in theology, arose and said:

It will hardly be expected, Mr. President, that I should offer a speech, especially in the presence of this brilliant throng of clergy and laity and ladies. For, Sir, I am one of those who belong to a younger generation, and who are here as listeners, not as speakers. I may, however, refer to a single passage in the discourse of the morning, in which was a deserved tribute to the far-sighted wisdom and generous philanthropy of Benjamin Day, the founder of the institution of learning which, for nearly fifty years, has conferred rich and varied benefits upon this town.* I know not that any of his lineal descendants are here; but I see before me one who bears his honored name, and who was for several years an instructor in the Academy. Without irreverence to the Scriptures, I would offer this sentiment:

"A Day is these courts is better than a thousand."

The following are the remarks of Rev. Samuel Day, of Springfield, in reply to the foregoing:

I am not willing, Mr. President, by a "*speech*" of mine, to run any risk of disturbing the feelings with which this audience must retire from these joyous solemnities.

No, Sir. The impressions made on our minds, during the day, are too delightful, and the associations connected with it are too hallowed, to be jeoparded in any way, and *I* would not disturb them. It is

* *Day's Academy*, which was founded here by *Benjamin Day*, Esq., in the year 1808, is still a flourishing and useful institution, frequented not only by our own citizens, but by many from other towns. Its present Principal is Mr. *Augustus H. Buck*, late of Amherst College, an experienced and popular teacher.

enough that the hero of the occasion is here, loaded with the weight, and bearing the honors of half a century's pastoral service; enough that he has taken us, in thought, over the entire space, through which, as the spiritual guide of this church and people, he has so faithfully and honorably toiled; — honorably to himself, faithfully to them.

With *him*, therefore, and with those who have so eloquently addressed us, together with the ladies, who have so elegantly *dressed* these viands, would I have the honor of all the pleasing reminiscences and holy associations connected with these scenes.

I will, then, only respond to the courtesy of my young clerical friend (Mr. Geo. P. Fisher) on the right, in the reference which has been made to my name, in connection with the seminary of learning in this place, (Day's Academy,) and close with this *sentiment* — no less the conviction than the desire of my mind. May he become, in the scriptural sense of the term, a *Fisher of men.*

The whole assembly then united in singing the following Original Hymn, composed, and kindly furnished for the occasion, by Rev. Wm. M. Thayer, of Ashland:

Bright memories throng on rapid wing,
This hour of festive joy below;
Thoughts into fruitful being spring
From seed sown FIFTY YEARS ago.

These walls that echo to our praise,
These fields of Zion, blooming fair,
Repeat the tale of other days,
With FIFTY YEARS of faith and prayer.

Time marks these footworn aisles of God;
This flock the faithful record gives,
That change upon this spot hath trod,
And yet the aged Shepherd lives.

Death with a skilful hand hath cut
A thousand heart-strings every year;
Some loved ones of this flock are not;
But still God keeps the Shepherd here.

And yet in peace may he abide;
His people warm affection show;
As when they chose him for their guide
And pastor, FIFTY YEARS ago.

And when they lay him in the dust,
And love some fond memorial rears;
Lord! may they view the sacred trust,
And bless Thee for these FIFTY YEARS.

After the singing of the hymn some individuals began to leave the hall, the exercises having been already somewhat protracted, when Mr. James observed to the audience that he perceived the face of a ministerial brother and college friend directed toward the door, and should be sorry to lose sight of his white locks before he had contributed his share to the *public* entertainment of this meeting. Whereupon the Rev. I. N. Tarbox, of Framingham, whose "locks are white, but not with years," made brief answer, thus:

It has occurred to me, Mr. Chairman, since I have been here participating in the services and festivities of this occasion, whether some-

thing ought not to be done to make these seasons of more frequent occurrence in the community. The idea of celebrating the *fiftieth* anniversary of a pastor's settlement, is an idea conformed to the modes and habits of a by-gone age. We live at a time when every thing moves faster, and a man becomes venerable in the ministry quicker. For instance, I have been in the ministry a little less than five years, and already about two-thirds of the pastors who were settled in the churches of my Conference, at the time of my ordination, have gone. I begin to feel considerably like a patriarch among my brethren. It has occurred to me, whether the period should not be shortened and brought down to the style of things in the present age, and I would suggest *ten* years, instead of *fifty*, as a suitable time for these commemorations. Some arrangement of this kind would insure a more frequent return of occasions like the present, which have now (much to the grief of the community) grown to be exceedingly rare; and also, it would give some of us younger ministers a *chance*. In the present arrangement of things our case is well nigh hopeless.

Esq. Warner then gave the following:

Our *Fishers* have made their offering, but in he depths of our *Ponds* silence has prevailed.

This brought out a speech from Rev. Preston Pond, of Milford, a native of this town, who said:

Mr. President. There is a great interest connected with celebrations like the present. They mark a permanent ministry, and in this view they are to be considered as the signals of an age which all have reason to fear is fast vanishing away in its twilight. Ministerial jubilees, it is to be feared, will be rare in the coming age, unless *we* celebrate our fiftieth *settlement* instead of the fiftieth *year* of our settlement. Those who have grown up under the instructions of him whose jubilee is held to-day, and whose good fortune it was to be educated in childhood to revere the ministers of God for their work's sake, have peculiar remembrances as they gather around their venerable pastor to-day. The imagination of youth conspired with parental instruction, and led me to suppose that my pastor was, both physically and intellectually, a remarkably *great* man. His frame looked taller and his words appeared more weighty than those of other men. When in the capacity of school committee he told me, in connection with fellow pupils, that I made rather too much noise with my feet, I verily thought that all "*original*" and "*actual*" sin lay in the feet, which *would* kick in the school-house, almost against the determinations of the will; and it seemed to me a very profound logic which assured us that a good many *little* noises made one tremendous *great* one.

The reverential feelings of piously educated children towards their ministers are most salutary; and even manhood is somewhat awed in its waywardness when it finds itself standing again in the presence of the ministry of its childhood. I rejoice to-day in the continued life and health of our venerable father in the ministry. I heartily sympathize with all that has been said of his hale and youthful appearance. I will close with this sentiment:

The venerable Senior Pastor of this Church. Should he live to attend

the Jubilee of the Junior Pastor (as hinted by Dr. Cleveland,) it is to be presumed that he will not be a whit older, than when, thirty years ago, he made the marks in Br. Smalley's Latin Grammar.

The President of the Day, noticing that the father of the last speaker stood beside him during the offering of the remarks, observed, the moment they were through —

We have heard a great deal from our *clerical* friends, but little from those of *other callings;* whereupon Gen. Preston Pond said:

Mr. President. I, as you know, am a shoemaker and there is an evident propriety in my following gentlemen of the clerical profession; — in fact there is a more intimate connection between the last speaker and myself than might be supposed, even by those who know our relationship — for we are alike sedulous in our care for the *souls* (soles) of our fellow-men; and moreover, Sir, we labor with *all* (awl) and hold on to the *last.*

Instead of making a speech, I will, with your permission, offer as a sentiment:

The two she-bears we read of in the Old Testament. May we be admonished by the fate of the forty-and-two children who were torn in pieces, not to say to our prophet Elisha, "Go up, thou bald head," for this would be not only an expression of contempt, but *a lie.* For *our* Elisha's hair appears precisely the same it did fifty years ago. Every particular hair is combed straight back, just as it was then, without any variableness or shadow of turning; furnishing an exact index of his preaching during this whole period, and of the unchangeable course of his ministerial proceedings.

The next toast given was this:

Our Junior Pastor. We will keep him as long as we have our Senior Pastor, if he will behave as well.

Rev. Mr. James acknowledged the compliment in a few words, but said he was by no means ready to make such a promise as this. He could give no pledges of good behavior. There was danger that he might not fulfil them. It was, however, his purpose to "behave" as well as he could, taking for his standard no particular individual, but trying to follow every good example. And if the people should continue to treat him as kindly and considerately as they had ever done, bearing with his faults, excusing his weaknesses, forgiving his shortcomings, and coöperating with him for the welfare of society and the church, he could see no end to their union but death itself. He knew not whether it would be so, and had no solicitude on the point. The morrow should take thought for the things of itself. For the present, he was contented, more than contented, — happy; truly so, in his connection with the people, in his enjoyment of their confidence and affection, and in the belief that God was making him useful.

Rev. Tertius D. Southworth, of Franklin, was called upon by the Chair to favor us with remarks. Who replied —

Sir, at this late hour, I will not attempt a speech, but I give you this sentiment: *The Associated Pastors of Wrentham:* Moses and Joshua. As to the Senior, if we cannot truly say, "his eye is not dim," yet can

we not say, "his natural force is not abated?" As to the Junior, "And Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses."

Samuel Warner, Jr., Esq., then gave the following, to call out the *medical profession:*

Those who look after the interests of our *souls* have spoken; but those who heal our *bodies* have said nothing.

Dr. William W. Comstock, of Wrentham, responded to the call in a happy manner, and somewhat as follows:

Mr. President. The extreme lateness of the hour precludes the possibility of any thing like a speech from me, on this occasion. Indeed, Sir, what could I say which would speak half as plainly and intelligibly of the feelings of this community, as the hundred joyous countenances assembled here this afternoon, to mingle their sympathies and manifest their respect for our venerable friend, whose Jubilee we are met to celebrate?

Sir, in his fifty years' residence in this place, he has been intimately associated with a large portion of the individuals assembled in this hall during the whole period of their lives. With all of whom he has been a constant participator in all their joys and sorrows; while to many he has not only administered the waters of the first sacrament, but has also taken cognizance of their nuptial vows. And now, Sir, with these recollections all clustering freshly around their memories, they have come up here this afternoon, to do reverence to their pastor, and honor to the man. Had time permitted, Mr. President, I would have been glad to say somewhat on the relationship and intercourse which ever has, and in enlightened communities ever must, subsist, between the profession to which our Jubilant belongs, and that of which I claim to be so humble a member; as well as something of the relative duties which each owes to the other. But, Sir, as it would be ungenerous to occupy more time at this late hour, I will give you, if you please, for a sentiment:

The three learned Professions. United as they are by a common bond of intellectual and moral culture, their only rivalry should be an honorable competition for moral and intellectual excellence.

Mr. James then remarked —

Sir, it is on all hands admitted that we have had a delightful *voyage* to-day; and we are indeed fortunate, now at its conclusion, in coming to our "desired *Haven*."

This brought back Rev. Joseph Haven, Jr., of Brookline, who was on the point of leaving the hall.

He remarked that he had greatly enjoyed the occasion, and he had come to this place prepared with a *speech*, as requested by the Committee of Invitation. But most unfortunately for himself he had lost it. It was a good speech, a *beautiful* speech, a very *flowery* speech, but he and it had parted company. It was a speech, said he, which must have *taken* well with this audience. It would have been in good *odor*, and thought to be in good taste, I am sure. The *ladies* would have admired it. (The speaker referred to the vase of flowers he had brought from Brookline, which a friend now held up in the sight of the assembly.)

But, Sir, the loss of my speech is not the only thing in which I am disappointed. I came here to attend a *Jubilee*, to see an *old* gentleman who has spent a *half-century* with this people, and hear him tell the tale of *fifty years*. I came to see his bent form, his snowy locks, and limbs tottering on the verge of the grave. Now I confess, Sir, I have looked in vain for any such person, and I am quite disposed to believe there is some *deception* about the matter. I fear, Sir, this Jubilee is a *mere sham*. The good people of Wrentham are inclined to make merry at our expense. Mr. President, I am ready to believe any thing that is of itself credible. But here is a smart-appearing, hale, erect gentleman, somewhat in years, who has preached to us to-day, and told us about things "lang syne," who now sits in the desk by your side, but surely, no one takes *him* for an octogenarian. We are certainly *played with*. All the speakers have testified that he always appeared to them very much as he does at present, and for myself, Sir, I am about convinced that we have all been *hoaxed*. No person here has testified that he *saw* him ordained in the last century. *He can't prove it, Sir;* and I say again, it must be that *we have been hoaxed!*

Mr. Haven concluded amid roars of laughter, in which Mr. Fisk heartily joined.

A toast was given complimentary to Professor HANDEL POND, who conducted the music on this occasion, both at the public services and at the collation, in a highly satisfactory manner. He replied in brief terms, and closed with a *sentiment*, which was not distinctly heard by the reporter, but was understood to imply that somebody, we are left to guess who, was born in 1769, the same year with *Napoleon Bonaparte*, and other distinguished personages. Our reporter deserves to be censured for his remissness.

The exercises at the Collation were closed by singing, in "Old Hundred," the following stanzas:

Be thou, O God, exalted high;
And as thy glory fills the sky,
So let it be on earth displayed,
Till thou art here as there obeyed.

Eternal are thy mercies, Lord,
Eternal truth attends thy word;
Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore.
Till suns shall rise and set no more.

The Song which follows was kindly furnished by a clerical friend, in honor of the occasion, but did not come to hand in season to be sung at the Jubilee. The author has our thanks for this contribution of his *pen*, as well as for the words that fell from his lips at the Collation.

A SONG OF RANSOMED SOULS,

In commemoration of the Semi-Centennial Celebration of the settlement of Rev. Elisha Fisk, at Wrentham, June 12, 1849.

Wake! Spirits, wake! and hear
Those notes of joy on earth!

A festal day returns,—
Men celebrate the morn
When one of God's elect
Was placed on Salem's towers,
To watch for souls, { When evils come,
And cry aloud, { Or dangers throng.

And thou, O man of God,
Thou, listen to our song,
The song of ransomed ones,
Redeemed by Christ's own blood,
And rescued by His word,
The word of truth and grace,
As preached by thee, { Upon our souls,
And Spirit-sealed { To cleanse from sin.

We sing the song of heaven;
The wonders of God's grace;—
We sing these crowns of life,
Won by His matchless love;—
We sing of ransomed souls,
Fast by the throne of God,
Waiting above, { Seals of thine own,—
To welcome thee;— { Stars for thy crown.

Thou faithful hast been found,
These two-score years and ten;
A Servant tried, and true
In all required of thee;
Ambassador for God,
Beseeching men, { To turn from sin,
In place of Him, { And trust His grace.

Then strike with us *thy* lyre,
Put on thy strength anew;
Look back upon the past,
And on to glory too;—
See ransomed souls above,
See ransomed souls below,
With heart and voice, { In songs of praise
Unite their lays, { On this glad day.

Our work on earth is done,—
Toil yet remains for thee;
We chant our hymns of praise,—
Thou still on earth must pray.
But wait, a few short years,
The time appointed thee,
Then glad we'll come, { To bear thee up
An angel band, { To heaven,—*our* home.

The Letters that follow, with many others which we have not space to publish, were received in answer to invitations to attend the Jubilee. They are addressed to Rev. Mr. James, as being Committee of Correspondence on behalf of the Committee of Arrangements.

Besides those letters inserted, others were received from Rev. Jonathan Leavitt, of Providence. Rev. Wm. Leavitt, of Newton Corner. Rev. Daniel Butler, of Westborough. Rev. Eli Thurston, of Fall River. Rev. L. H. Angier, of Medford. Rev. Jonathan Edwards, of Woburn. Rev. David Dyer, of Dorchester Village. Rev. A. C. Thompson, of Roxbury. Rev. A. H. Reed, of Mendon. Rev. S. W. Hanks, of Lowell. Rev. H. D. Walker, of East Abington. Alfred Evans, Esq., of Boston. Wm. H. Long, Esq., of Rox-

bury. E. L. Childs, Esq., of Henniker, N. H. Hon. Horace Mann, West Newton. Hon. Wm. Baylies, West Bridgewater. Hon. Orin Fowler, Fall River, Rev. J. Ferguson, Whately.

New Braintree, July 13th, 1849.

Rev. Horace James — Dear Sir:— Propriety requires that an answer should be returned to your very kind and polite request, "in behalf of the Committee of Arrangements," that I would attend the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of my friend and namesake, the Rev. E. Fisk. To tell you the truth, your letter did not reach me until the last day in June. It was forwarded from Braintree, where it might have been allowed to continue for several weeks. Mr. Fisk spoke to me upon the subject in Boston, on our anniversary week. I then felt it would be quite uncertain whether I should be able to attend. But upon the receipt of your letter, such were the feelings awakened in view of the occasion, that it seemed to me, if I could have placed myself back to the time of meeting, I should have endeavored to put all obstacles aside. Although I could have added little to the interest of the occasion, by anything I could have said, yet the presence of one more "of the *few*," who are spared in a ministry of fifty years, might of itself have given rise to some thought or feeling, which did not exist. It has occupied my thoughts the more, as it seems, from existing circumstances, that these occasions will hereafter be very unfrequent, unless the churches change their course of action.

I have been happy to learn, from various sources, that the scene was quite interesting at Wrentham; a large concourse being present, and the Sermon and Speeches appropriate. Please, Sir, present my respects and congratulations to Mr. Fisk, and say, I hope I may not only hear of his Discourse, but, through his favor, be allowed to read it.

Accept, Sir, for yourself, my sincere regards.

Yours, truly, John Fiske.

Georgetown, June 8th, 1849.

Rev. and Dear Sir: — Please accept my thanks for yourself, and the other gentlemen of the Committee of Arrangements, for your and their polite request to be present at the Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Rev. Mr. Fisk's ministry in Wrentham. It would give me sincere pleasure to witness the scene, and to afford what little help I might be able, did circumstances permit. It must be highly interesting to yourself, to your venerable colleague, and to the people who have so long enjoyed his faithful ministrations of the word of life, and the ordinances of our holy religion. Doubtless, the assisting clergymen, and the numerous spectators on the occasion, will be partakers of the joy. This joy I must beg leave, though reluctantly, to deny myself. To a considerable degree I feel the infirmities of age, being within a month of seventy-nine years. The distance and inconvenience of leaving home, must be taken into the account.

I have not had the pleasure of a particular personal acquaintance with Mr. Fisk, but from reputation have been led to consider him an able,

sound and worthy divine, and wise to win souls to his blessed Lord and Master. That he may yet live and be useful many years, and that his colleague may enjoy a life equally long, respectable, and conducive to the up-building of the Redeemer's kingdom, and that we may all meet in the world of glory at the great and last day, is the prayer of, dear Sir, Yours truly, ISAAC BRAMAN.

North Brookfield, June 9th, 1849.

DEAR SIR:— Your favor of the 4th inst., I received Friday evening, having been absent through the week. I thank you for the polite invitation extended to me by the gentlemen Committee, to be present at the contemplated Semi-Centennial Celebration in your place on the 12th inst. But previous engagements will probably prevent my attendance. I hope that it may be a pleasant and memorable meeting, to the Senior Pastor, Church and People, and to all who may have opportunity to attend the Festivities of the occasion.

Yours, with due respect,

THOMAS SNELL.

Andover, June 11th, 1849.

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER: — It would afford me great pleasure to be with you to-morrow. I have long known Brother Fisk, and have esteemed and loved him; and should be greatly gratified to unite with his friends on such an interesting occasion. He has been in the ministry the same number of *years* with me, only I was ordained six months before him. He has had a successful and happy ministry; and I am persuaded that the grace of Christ will be with him, living and dying. Give my sincerest regards to him.

I am, very affectionately your brother,

LEONARD WOODS.

P. S. I have this morning returned from a journey, and my engagements are such as to prevent my being present with you to-morrow.

REV. H. JAMES.

Leicester, June 9th, 1849.

REV. MR. JAMES — DEAR SIR: — I have been waiting for circumstances, to determine whether I could be present at the *Semi-Centennial Celebration* in Wrentham or not, till I fear this will not reach you before the occasion shall have passed by.

I find that I cannot consistently leave home next week. I certainly regret this, as I wish to show my respect to the venerable Pastor, whom I remember from early life, and to enjoy the occasion.

Accept my thanks for your kind invitation to me and my family to be with you. Assure Mr. F. of my regrets, that I cannot in person express the interest I feel in him and in the day; that, I trust, will be highly interesting to all.

Very truly and cordially yours,

JOHN NELSON.

Braintree, June 7th, 1849.

Rev. Mr. James — My Dear Sir: — Your note of the 4th instant, conveying, a kind invitation to the Semi-Centennial Celebration of the 12th instant, was received this morning. Be assured that I highly appreciate the honor thereby done me, and should gratefully accept the invitation, but for a previous engagement on that day. The principle on which it has ever been my aim to act, is the very simple one of foregoing *pleasurable* indulgences at the demand of *duty;* and that principle requires the sacrifice of the very great pleasure of meeting my venerated and highly honored friend and father, your colleague, on an occasion of the liveliest interest to him, and thousands who have shared the blessings of his ministry — as also, of meeting you and many other dear brethren in Christ, whose faces I always love to see in the flesh, and whose society I hope, though unworthy, to share in that brighter world, where semi-centennial celebrations will be exchanged for an everlasting feast of love and joy.

My most cordial salutations to the beloved "Senior Pastor," with the earnest prayer, that his last days may be his best days; and accept for the *Junior* Pastor every assurance of the high esteem and tender affection of your much obliged

Brother in Christ, R. S. Storrs.

Monson, June, 12th, 1849.

Rev. Mr. James — Dear Sir: — I received last evening your letter of the 1st instant, conveying an invitation to attend the Semi-Centennial Celebration of the ministry of your colleague, the Rev. Mr. Fisk. It would afford me much pleasure to be present and join in the solemnities of the occasion, but the late hour in which I received the invitation and previous engagements, will not permit.

I beg you to present my thanks to Mr. Fisk and the Committee for this expression of regard.

Few attain to the ministry of fifty years, and fewer retain, during that period, the affectionate confidence of a people, and have their usefulness continued. Very many things cluster around such an occasion to render it deeply interesting and important, and though not permitted to be present, I hope to be favored with an account of the doings, and the privilege of reading the Sermon.

May the great Head of the Church be present to bless the exercises for the spiritual good of both pastors and people.

Let the aged pastor never fail to receive the affection, and reverence, and sympathy of all, especially of the young.

With great respect, and with Christian affection,

I am, dear sir, yours, &c., A. Ely.

Brown University, June 9th, 1849.

Rev. and Dear Sir: — I received your very acceptable letter last evening. I beg you to return to the Committee my grateful acknowl-

edgments for the honor of their invitation, and express to them my regret that an engagement at the Hospital for the Insane, on Tuesday, will deprive me of the pleasure of uniting with them on the interesting occasion on that day.

In the sincere hope that the day may be one of unmixed pleasure, and that the spirit of the Pilgrims may be gloriously renewed, I remain, My dear Sir, yours most truly,

F. Wayland.

Rev. Horace James.

Dedham, June 11th, 1849.

Rev. and Dear Sir: — I find that I shall not be present at your Celebration to-morrow, to see a minister and a people who have borne with each other's infirmities for half a century. But as there are other good works besides hearing good sermons and eating good dinners, I will venture to whisper in the ear, when your hearts are full and generous around the table:

1. That we make a donation of $100 to the Senior Pastor, of which I will pay $10.

2. That he be earnestly requested to prepare for the press a volume of his excellent Sermons, not less than fifty in number; one for each year of his ministry, of which the Semi-Centennial Sermon shall be one; and for this volume I subscribe for ten copies.

Very respectfully, with Christian salutations,

E. Burgess.

Andover, June 9th, 1849.

Rev. H. James — Dear Sir: — Your letter of invitation to the approaching Jubilee of your venerable colleague, is received; and it is a self-denial to me not to come, but professional duties forbid. I feel an unusual interest in your village, in its people, and its history. Honored relatives of mine reside there, and my natural descent is in the line of one of your predecessors in the Pastoral office.

Allow me to express the hope that the Sermon will be printed; and also to suggest the propriety of publishing a VOLUME OF SERMONS, by the former pastors of your ancient church, selected from such manuscripts as can now be obtained. Short biographical sketches might be added, or any other relevant matter which would increase the value of the volume. Discourses written by such men as Mann, Messinger, Beane, and Avery, and the present pastors of the church, would be read with great interest by many, not only in Wrentham, but elsewhere. Would not every family, and almost every individual in your village, desire to possess a specimen of the style and manner of thought after which the religious opinions and habits of their ancestry were formed?

Will not the Junior Pastor take this subject into consideration, and,

at some suitable time, edit a volume of this nature, to be called, perhaps, The Wrentham Pulpit. With kind regards to Mr. Fisk and yourself, I have the honor to be, if not

A *son*, at least a *grandson* of
Wrentham.

E. A. Park.

Plympton, June 8th, 1849.

Rev. and Dear Brother: — I have the honor to acknowledge your invitation to be with you on an occasion of so much interest as the Semi-Centennial Celebration to be held at Wrentham, on the 12th inst. Accept my thanks for the invitation. Let me assure you that it would give me great pleasure to be present, and take some humble part in the services, as you suggest. Previous arrangements will render it wholly inconsistent for me to be present. Tender my best regards to my aged brother, on whose account the day is to be celebrated. In the mean time allow me to state, through the Committee of Arrangements, to the great gathering I anticipate will be there, a few items, upon which I might dilate if I were present. I would briefly state my views of the causes of a changing, in opposition to a permanent ministry. A minister of the Gospel, for I speak of no other, finds his *rotary motion* in relation to the *place* of his labor in some or all of the following particulars:

1. Ignorance of human nature in its various phases, changing like the moon, and as destitute of light; governed by no fixed laws, except the law of passion and selfishness. Brethren in this situation always find trouble, and often great trouble, and they must leave to be out of the way of it.

2. The want of self-government. "A man of God must not strive."

3. A want of personal economy in his worldly transactions; great perplexity arising from the non-fulfilment of parochial promises. He has depended upon his salary to meet his engagements, and is disappointed and tried. He hastily resolves to leave, not taking into the account, that human nature everywhere is the same, and man the same disappointing agent.

4. A neglect of professional duties, especially his study, so as to feed the church of God with bread and understanding. "Give thyself wholly to the work; *teach* all nations."

5. Prudence in the government of the Church; without partiality in the exercise of sympathy or weakness, is sometimes greatly wanting. It leads to divisions. But the fault does not always lie at the minister's door. The churches and the people have their freaks, and will perplex and tease such men as Job and Solomon, and drive a good man from among them. "Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?"

6. The system of inviting evangelists and revival preachers, so called, can hardly fail to diminish the pastor in the eyes of a portion of the church and people, and seldom fails to divide them. Advice is secretly given, if you want a revival you must dismiss your minister. "Come and see my zeal for the Lord."

7. A finding fault with the preaching. If it be doctrinal, it is cold and speculative; if practical, it is too pointed at particular individuals; so that a "man of God, set to show unto men the way of salvation," must not preach fully either doctrine or duty, if he would please. Many an able preacher has been compelled to leave and find another home.

8. We have heard this man as long as we wish. He has the same voice, the same tones and manner, the same doctrines, and the same round of services. They lose their interest in him, and he must leave. This is an high encomium on any minister, that he has not changed in these changing times.

9. The opinion entertained, that the usefulness of a minister has come to an end.

I am affectionately yours, ELIJAH DEXTER.

Abington, June 11th, 1849.

REV. H. JAMES: — Permit me to express to your Committee of Arrangements my thanks for the honor they have done me in extending me an invitation, through you, to attend the Semi-Centennial Celebration in Wrentham; and my regret that my engagements are such that I must be denied the pleasure of being present. The occasion is one of deep interest, and one which, under the present *moveable* ministry, is not likely hereafter to occur very frequently in New England. All honor to stable *pastors* and stable *people*. To the unstable they are as gold to quicksilver. Wishing you a joyous celebration for your much-honored colleague, and a similar one for yourself in due time, I subscribe myself, yours, most respectfully, JAMES W. WARD.

REV. H. JAMES, for the Committee of Arrangements.

Boston, June 7th, 1849.

REV. H. JAMES — DEAR SIR: — Yours of the 4th, on behalf of the Committee of Arrangements for the Semi-Centennial Celebration on the 12th instant, inviting me, with my family and friends, to be present at that interesting occasion, was duly received. Be assured, my dear Sir, that it would afford me great pleasure to be able to comply with your kind and polite invitation, and I very much regret that a previous and important official engagement will deprive me of that pleasure.

May a kind Providence smile benignly upon the occasion, and upon all who may participate in its interesting services, and especially upon our friend and father, whose Semi-Centennial Jubilee you celebrate.

The following sentiment, if appropriate, is at your service:

The half Century. The fifty years which the Senior Pastor has spent with this people — in respect to important events, discoveries, and improvements in almost every branch of enterprise, knowledge and benevolence — may be regarded as THE half century in our world's history.

Very truly yours, ASA BULLARD.

Pawtucket, June 6th, 1849.

Rev. and Dear Sir: — Your very kind invitation to be present at your Semi-Centennial Celebration is received. I regret exceedingly that a previous engagement will prevent me from attending. Our Consociation meets on that day. My short dinner speech should be:

"*Tempus irreparabile fugit.*" May the Junior Pastor serve as long as his Senior has, and both receive the reward of faithful ministers of Jesus Christ.

Accept, dear Sir, my thanks for your polite invitation, for yourself and the Committee for whom you act.

Very truly, yours, C. Blodgett.

Charlestown, June 6th, 1849.

Dear Sir: — I have the honor to acknowledge the reception of your favor of the 4th instant, inviting me, in the name of the Committee of Arrangements, to be present at the Semi-Centennial Celebration of your venerable colleague's settlement. I regret to find that a previous engagement of a public character, for Tuesday next, will render it impossible for me to be present on that day. It is the more a source of regret to me, as it would have afforded me unfeigned pleasure to witness the festivities of an occasion, which I cannot but hope will serve to strengthen and to hallow the pastoral tie, not only among your own people, but in our churches generally. May it be a season of sacred delight and extensive usefulness; and though I cannot be present on this occasion, I hope I may live to witness the next — in November, 1893! Very truly, your brother,

W. I. Budington.

Rev. H. James.

Taunton, June 12th, 1849.

Rev. and dear Sir: — I acknowledge the receipt of a communication from you, on behalf of the Committee of Arrangements, inviting me to participate in the interesting proceedings this day in Wrentham. Providentially prevented from complying with this kind invitation, permit me to wish *you*, my dear Sir, your venerable *associate* in the pastoral office, your people, and the *many* friends who, I doubt not will be with you, abundant joy and profit in the occasion. The Pastorate of the Preacher carries us back to a preceding century. One of the ministers of Taunton, in the last century, the seventh from its settlement, was once located in that part of Wrentham now called Franklin, the immediate predecessor of the immortal Emmons. I refer to Rev. Caleb Barnum, a minister, as tradition informs us, of "commanding appearance, of dignified deportment, of pleasing, affable manners, uniting the paternal mildness of the clergyman with the grace and polish of the gentleman." Mr. Barnum was not only a preacher but a patriot. He periled, and at length *lost* his life, whilst serving as a chaplain in the Revolutionary struggle. On the approach of death, he was questioned as to the goodness of the American cause, in which he had been engaged, and by means of which he

was about to die; he replied: "I have no *doubt* of the *justice* and *goodness* of that cause, and had I a *thousand* lives, I should be willing to lay them *all* down in it."

There is no danger of bearing our fathers in too frequent remembrance. Nor can we prize too highly those hoary heads, and venerable forms, which *remind* us of the "*ancient* days." "The Lord our God be with *us*, as He was with our *fathers*. Let him not *leave* us, nor *forsake* us. That He may *incline* our *hearts* unto Him, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and His statutes and his Judgments, which he commanded our *fathers*."

Yours, in the faith of the Gospel,

S. Hopkins Emery.

Rev. Horace James, *Wrentham.*

Brown University, June 11th, 1849.

Rev. and Dear Sir: — I have but this day received your very kind letter of the 8th instant, inviting me, on the part of the Committee of Arrangements, to be present at the delivery of the "half-century sermon" of the Rev. Mr. Fisk, to take place to-morrow. Nothing, I assure you, would give me greater pleasure than to accept your invitation. What is more delightful to behold, than a minister and people, who in these days of change, have coöperated together for a half a century; and are now, by appropriate services, about to commemorate this long and happy union? It is a rare occasion, which I would gladly honor as it deserves, but my engagements for the day positively put it out of my power to be present.

You mention the fact, that Mr. Fisk was once a Tutor in this Institution. The town of Wrentham showed an early friendship for this College, and has sent hither many students who have left on its records, and who have also borne with them, honorable testimonials of their industry, scholarship, and worth, and who, in after life, in their several professions, have reflected honor upon their Alma Mater.

Allow me to propose the following sentiment, I trust neither untrue nor unsuited to the occasion:

The Graduates of Brown University, from the Town of Wrentham. May they show themselves in time to come, as in times past, to be men of sound learning, and good morals, and the friends of "soul Liberty;" and to many of them may it be permitted to follow the example of the venerable Fisk, in preaching a half-century sermon.

With sentiments of respect,

I am your obedient and humble servant,

A. Caswell.

Rev. Horace James.

Providence, June 11th, 1849.

My Dear Sir: — I did not receive, until Saturday your kind invitation to myself and family to attend a "Semi-Centennial Celebration" on the 12th inst., and hear a half century sermon from the Rev. Elisha

Fisk. It would give me great pleasure, I assure you, to be present, but circumstances must deprive me of that gratification.

Although a half century has now elapsed, I have a most vivid recollection of Mr. F.'s ordination, and of many incidents attending it, and it would be a source of great pleasure to hear him give an account of his "stewardship," and recount such events as he might deem proper, which have taken place in connection with his Gospel ministry during that period. I have always entertained the highest respect for him as a minister of Christ, laboring to fulfil the duties of his calling, and much regret I cannot make it convenient to come to Wrentham on this very interesting occasion.

It is now more than forty years since I have resided in my native town, but I never visit it without a thrill of pleasure, and whispering to myself, "*this is my own, my native land.*"

Should any sentiments be offered at the festive board allow me to offer the following, from the inspired pen of the Psalmist:

Old Wrentham. "If I forget thee let my right hand forget her cunning."

Hoping, dear Sir, you may be blessed in all your ministerial labors, accept the assurance of my high consideration, and believe me very respectfully your obedient servant, BENJAMIN COWELL.

REV. HORACE JAMES.

Boston, June 11th, 1849.

MY DEAR SIR: — Your favor of the 6th instant, inviting me to attend the Semi-Centennial Celebration, to be held on Tuesday, the 12th instant, was duly received. It would afford me very sincere satisfaction to attend this celebration, both on account of the pleasure I should be sure to derive from meeting old friends in Wrentham, and of the earnest desire I feel to evince my great respect and regard for the venerable gentlemen, the Senior Pastor of the church in that place. But official engagements will necessarily prevent my attending.

I hope the occasion will be one long remembered with pleasure and profit by those who attend it.

With thanks to the Committee of Arrangements for their gratifying invitation, I am, dear Sir, Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

REV. HORACE JAMES. GEORGE C. WILDE.

Boston, June 11th, 1848.

MY DEAR SIR: — Your favor of the 4th, was duly received, extending to myself and family an invitation to be present to-morrow, to join in your Semi-Centennial Celebration; and I regret to find that business engagements will deprive me of the pleasure. I thought, until very recently, that I should be able to be with you on the occasion referred to, or I should have written you before.

Please present my kind regards to Mr. Fisk, and believe me,

Yours, very truly,

REV. H. JAMES. BRADFORD SUMNER.

Fall River, June 11th, 1849.

DEAR SIR: — Be pleased to accept my thanks, with the acknowledgment of the receipt of your kind note, inviting me to be present at your forthcoming Celebration to-morrow. I have many inducements that would lead to its acceptance, if I had the power of option; but I have not. Our Court sits for business that day, and I must attend its sitting. With the Rev. Gentleman who is to take the leading part in the performances of the day I have been for years acquainted, and with some of the members of his family for a longer period, and with greater intimacy. For each and all I have great kindness and respect. The scene, too, will be one of no ordinary interest. The speaker will address an audience composed, in part, of the children, grandchildren, and perhaps great grandchildren, of those who, half a century gone bye, invited him to the work of the ministry, and witnessed and took part in the solemnities of his ordination and consecration to the great work to which the vigor of his manhood and the strength of his declining years have been devoted. The occasion will bring to him a throng, not of "thick-coming fancies," but of recollections, variegated as the incidents of life, and moving deeply all the springs of human passion and emotion. Connected with the place, too, and its history, are many subjects which will add to the interest of the occasion. It would afford me great gratification to witness the transactions of the day, but it is a pleasure I cannot partake of.

I am, with great respect, and renewed thanks for your politeness,

Your obedient servant, O. J. HOLMES.

Randolph, June 9th, 1849.

REV. HORACE JAMES — MY DEAR SIR: — Please accept for yourself and the Committee of Arrangements my grateful acknowledgments for your kind invitation to myself and family to be present at the Semi-Centennial Celebration to be held in Wrentham on the 12th instant.

I regret that a previous engagement, to attend a Sabbath School Convention at South Braintree on that day, will prevent me from availing myself of your hospitality, and participating in the religious services and festivities of the occasion.

Please present my kind regards to the Rev. Mr. Fisk, whom I have long known as a faithful minister, and the friend and patron of every enterprise adapted to honor God and promote the happiness of man. And allow me to add my earnest hope that his successor may live as long, and be even more successful as an ambassador for God, and preach his Semi-Centenial in a ripe old age.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant, EBENEZER ALDEN.

Some short extracts from the secular and religious papers, will close the account of this celebration.

* * * * * * * The Address of Mr. Fisk was a history of himself, the church and the people for *fifty years.* It was well written, and delivered distinctly and with a good deal of eloquence. He spoke for an hour and fifty minutes without any apparent weariness to himself or the crowded audience.

* * * * * * * * * * Toasts were read by the Junior Pastor, the Rev. Horace James, which called out a number of gentlemen for speeches. For three hours there was a spirited emanation of wit and eloquence. I cannot report the speeches, nor even give you a synopsis of them, but when I tell you *who* spoke, you will feel assured we had an intellectual treat of no ordinary richness.

* * * * * In the evening, Mrs. James, the accomplished Lady of the Junior Pastor, held a levee, which was attended by a large number of the bright and active, whose energies had not been exhausted by the labors of the day, among whom Mr. Fisk appeared as fresh and active as any. Mr. Poor, the veteran Missionary, was there, receiving, during the evening the special attention of the ladies. The piano was made to "discourse most excellent music," and a few sweet and cultivated voices delighted the company with the best songs of the day.

Rev. Horace James, the Junior Pastor, and his Lady, were efficient and active in the whole affair, from beginning to end. In fact, it was the subject of much remark and commendation that they should with such a hearty good will, seek to do everything that could be done, to render successful this tribute of love and respect to their Senior.

The whole affair has been entirely successful from beginning to end, and cannot fail of leaving a pleasant and lasting impression with Mr. Fisk and his excellent family. — *Boston Post.*

The 12th instant was an interesting day at Wrentham. Fifty Years were then completed, since the ordination of the Rev. Elisha Fisk over the Church and Society there. During this long period, he has labored almost without interruption by sickness, and never, that I can remember, or have heard of, taking any respite, by journeying or otherwise, from the active duties of the ministry; and he labored alone, until five years ago, when an able, working colleague was settled with him. It is a peculiar feature of this long ministry of Mr. Fisk, and speaks volumes in his praise, that there has, for all this time, been no division of his church or society; no creation of any new church, nor the erection of any other house of worship in his parish. There has been a diversity of opinion at times, and some animated controversy; but Mr. Fisk has guided the discordant elements with a judicious hand. The deep-seated regard and reverence for him, felt by the people, contributed largely to the maintenance of peace, and made his position at all times strong.

* * * * * He spoke an hour and fifty minutes with energy and distinctness, and was listened to with undimished interest to the last. Midway in his discourse he paused for a few moments, when the choir sung an exceeding rich anthem, composed expressly for the occasion by Professor Handel Pond.

In the evening, Mrs. James, the lady of the Junior Pastor, held a levee at her house, which was attended by a large number of Ladies

and gentlemen of the town, and from abroad. It was the source of general and deep regret, that the excellent lady of Mr. Fisk was prevented by sickness from taking part in this interesting celebration. His two sons were absent. But his three daughters were there, with their husbands and children, to witness, with hearts overflowing with emotion, this strong manifestation by the people, of their love and respect for their venerable parent. It was the verdict of the people with whom, and for whom he had labored fifty years, saying, " *Well done, good and faithful servant!* " and as a strong expression of undiminished confidence and regard, must have been gratifying to Mr. Fisk and his family.

The whole affair was well got up and conducted, and reflected great credit on the ladies and gentlemen of Wrentham. And as an "invited guest," I would express my thanks to them for one of the happiest days of my life. — *Norfolk Co. Democrat.*

We can give no report of Mr. Fisk's Discourse, which was a vast accumulation of facts and dates of local and of general interest, attended and completed by appropriate reflections. We trust that he is to be his own reporter, by furnishing a copy for the press. If this is done, as it must be, we shall take pleasure in preparing an abstract for our columns.

The well executed music was performed by a veteran choir, most of whom looked as though they might have occupied the " singers' seats," nearly as long as their aged pastor had filled the pulpit. One of them, if we mistake not, actually gloried in a *cue*, that rare relic of the olden time. We need not say, that these experienced performers did up their work in excellent taste, and in the brave old style. The antiquated tune of " Lenox " was sung with all its fugues and catches, in a way that makes us want to hear it again. We warrant that it was no better done, when, fifty years ago, it was intoned at the ordination of our *Nestorian patriarch.*

After the public services were concluded, a large procession was formed, and wound its willing way to a bounteous Collation, prepared for the occasion. A vigorous attack was made upon the viands, which, in their amplitude, well resisted the assaults which their tempting excellence provoked. The company, having worn out their keen appetites in a vain attempt to keep the good old Yankee rule of " clearing your plates," then gave ear to a succession of spirited Speeches, which afforded vent to such emotions towards the faithful pastor and his faithful flock, as this rare and delightful occasion was adapted to awaken. It was a day

> " Of that allowable and tempered mirth,
> Which leaves a joy for memory."

Puritan Recorder.